THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

FOUNDED, A.D. 1821

THE GREAT PIONEER FAMILY PAPER OF AMERICA

Vol. 77 — PUBLISHED WEEKLY, AT 425 ARCH STREET — Philadelphia, Saturday, December 25, 1897 — FIVE CENTS A COPY $2.00 A YEAR IN ADVANCE — No. 26

Entered at the Philadelphia Post-Office as Second-Class Matter

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ONCE A YEAR.

BY F. E. M.

Heap the logs and let the blaze
  Crackle round their russet girth;
Fill to-day of all your days,
  With the merriest of mirth.
Life has cares enough, God knows!
  Fate's demands are stern and drear;
Yet, for one day, banish woes—
  Christmas comes but once a year.

Draw the children round your knee;
  Tell them, in the cozy room,
How Kris Kringle, quaint to see,
  Issues from the chimney's gloom.
Share the happy games they play—
  Give their little hearts glad cheer;
Love them with deep love to-day—
  Christmas comes but once a year.

Wife, before the sun shall set,
  Show the husband of your choice
Some sweet tenderness that yet
  Sleeps unknown in smile or voice.
Husband, ere the daylight sink,
  Woo the wife you hold so dear
With old lover-vows, and think:
  "Christmas comes but once a year."

UNFORGOTTEN.

BY F. K.

I AM an old woman with a snowy head, and have lived a busy life and seen many changes; but, save for a few introductory words, I do not want to speak much of myself.

I kept a school for many years, and during that time there must have passed through my hands over a hundred girls, who came to me for that mysterious process called "finishing."

My work was arduous, and I was not fond of teaching; but then I loved to have young people about me. My pupils were nearly all good girls, and some of them were very intelligent, so my task was not disagreeable.

My patrons saw that I was successful as a teacher—any way, nearly all my girls won my warmest affections; they gave me plenty of love in return; and even now numerous wives and mothers of families who were among my early girls sign their letters to me, "Your loving child." I was their friend and confidante while they were under my roof; I have continued their friend and confidante to this day.

The story I am about to tell is that of Louisa Dawson, the best-loved of all my pupils. The whole record is substantially true. Many of my girls had strange experiences in life; Louisa's were the strangest of all, and for some years the saddest.

My house was in old Kensington Square—one of those large, charming, historical old houses in which men of note had congregated in the old times, and which always seemed haunted by memories of the past.

There came to me one day a letter from a lady living in the far North. She requested me to send her a prospectus of my establishment, and to give her some slight idea of my usual method with my pupils.

I had been strongly recommended to her, she informed me. She added that she had four daughters, and proposed sending her eldest to me for a year, that I might "finish her education," and prepare her to hold her position in society becomingly.

The Dawsons were a county family of considerable wealth, living on their own estate. But, whatever their position in life, Mrs. Dawson impressed me, judging by her correspondence, as rather ostentatious, if not absolutely underbred. However that might be, she decided to send her daughter to me; and, as she was coming up to town for shopping purposes, she would make her brief visit the opportunity of bringing Miss Dawson to me.

One day a lady drove up to my door in a stylish carriage drawn by very fine horses. Mrs. Dawson had brought me Louisa.

She stayed about two minutes, and gave me two injunctions—the first was to let the young girl take lessons from Taglioni, who had, as an elderly woman, after losing her fortune, set up a fashionable dancing school on the strength of her reputation in by-gone-days; the second was to impress upon my pupil the sin and folly of marrying a poor man, though she admired him.

Mrs. Dawson was pleasant in manner, and made no attempt to haggle about terms. On leaving she kissed her daughter's forehead lightly, and swept out of the house smiling, while Louisa clasped her hands and sighed heavily.

"My poor child!" I exclaimed, "don't be unhappy; everyone here will be kind to you, and I will do all I can to replace your mother while you are with me."

"I hope you won't," said Louisa impulsively, then added more quietly, "I shall not be at all unhappy, thank you—I am sure I shall not."

"Are you not sorry at leaving your home even for a year?"

"No," she confessed—"I am not sorry at all."

"Then what made you clasp your hands and give that deep sigh?"

Louisa looked at me sharply, came close to me, and putting her hand in mine, said:

"I know I clasped my hands, I know I sighed; it was because—— Did you ever see a bird in a cage watching for some happy accident to open the door? And did you ever see him, when it was just a little bit open, rush out and fly away over so high in the air, not caring the least bit in the world for the seed or the crumbs he had left behind him, or even for the lump of sugar between the bars—not caring whether he had even a chance of a nest to shelter in at nightfall, he felt so free and happy?"

"Yes," I answered—"I've seen such a thing; and I have known a silly sheep to wander out of the fold for the pleasure of freedom. The bird I have afterwards found dead on the garden path in the snow; and I have known the poor silly sheep to wander till lost among the hills, where no doubt it got starved to death. I dare say both creatures had instinct enough to wish to be back in the cage and the fold."

"Then I call them very silly, for they had tasted the joy of freedom, even if they had to die for it!" said Louisa.

I think I must have looked with both surprise and curiosity at my singular pupil. She was of medium height, exquisitely fair, with large full blue eyes, small regular features and a mass of golden hair.

Her hands and feet were beautiful. Her personal defects were that her chin was a little too small, her mouth always a little open, and there was certainly a want of expression in her face—her soul had never wakened. Would it ever wake?

She regarded me steadfastly again, then seated herself upon a low stool at my feet, and looking up into my face, said:

"I like you, ma'am. I think—yes, I think I shall love you. I hope you aren't angry with me?"

"Angry? Certainly not, child. But I am grieved to think you don't seem to care for your home, when one would fancy your whole heart would be full of tender memories and longings to get back there again, and to be seated just as you are now, only at your father's or mother's knee instead of mine. Don't you think you will miss your parents' morning and evening kiss?"

"My father never kissed me in my life," said Louisa, "my mother very seldom, and then only as you saw her do it to-day. When we were little—indeed until I was twelve years old—we children used to go down to dessert for nearly half an hour.

"Since then I've been kept quite in the schoolroom, with an awfully strict governess; and I've seen mamma only for ten minutes a day, and sometimes not at all for days together. My sisters, who are younger than I, sometimes drive out with her; but I never want—— I fancy she doesn't like me. I hope you like me, ma'am?"

"I should like you very much indeed, my dear," I answered, "if only——"

"If what?" she asked quickly.

"Child, I don't like to tell you!"

"Oh, pray, pray do!"

"Well, then, if your heart and conscience were awake."

"But how do you know they are asleep, ma'am?"

"My dear girl, if they were not slumbering you would never let a mere stranger hear you imply a censure on your home and on your parents."

"I don't call you a stranger. No, no!" she said resolutely. "I have looked well into your face; I can say anything to you, for I like you—yes, I like you ever so much!"

"Thank you, child. You have a forgiving disposition, or you would not bear my very plain speaking."

"I don't mind anything you say to me, ma'am. But please tell me how many girls there are?"

"Only three besides yourself."

"They said it was a school."

"Well, so it it, only we live like a private family. We work diligently—but then we have plenty of amusement. We go out, too, occasionally to concerts, theatres, and once a week we have an informal reception at home—in fact, I try to make my house a real home, Louisa."

"Delightful!" cried Louisa, her whole face brightening. "I shall at last know what 'home' means," she added dreamily.

Louisa seemed to grow prettier every day—charming indeed, as she woke up from a frost-bound existence. She was not clever or intellectual, and never would be a student. In acquiring the lighter accomplishments she did something, and soon grew graceful in deportment, while her voice became well modulated and her manner very pleasing. Best of all, her heart awoke, and her face grew lovely.

She grew very fond of me, almost troublesomely so; keeping constantly near me. Sometimes she startled me with her questions.

"May I call you 'auntie'?" she asked one day.

"Of course, dear, if you like."

"Tell me, then, auntie, what sort of person do you call a gentleman?"

"A gentleman, I should say, Louisa, is a man of irreproachable character, of good education, of refined, gentle manners, of strict honor—in fact, an ideal Christian."

"This is not what I ever heard before. I have been told that he must be well born and well mannered, and, however poor, he must never do anything to get his own living. But what does 'well-born' really mean, auntie?"

"According to the world's acceptation, child, it means one who can trace his ancestry a long way back, and can claim that none of them ever did any real work."

"How funny! We have several gentlemen of that sort in our neighborhood at home. I don't know them except by sight, for you know I'm not 'out;' and, when they were visitors at our house, I was never allowed to see or be seen by them.

"Indeed I know only the doctor—he is a gentleman according to what you say, for he is good, clever, and charming in manner; but I have been told he is a common man—and our clergyman too, who has no end of learning and is very refined; but people have found out that his grandfather was a miller."

"My dear child, did you ever ask your governess such a question?"

"Sometimes—only it was of no use; she used to say, 'Ask your mamma, Louisa.' She often looked very unhappy and bitter at those times. I know she had overheard it said that she was not quite a lady."

"And pray, Louisa, which was the truer gentleman of the two, the doctor or the clergyman?"

"Oh, the doctor!"—and, as she spoke, she blushed. "He is delightful! Besides, he is very handsome and young. He is called 'Grahame—Doctor Fergus Grahame.' He is a Scotchman, auntie. Don't you like Scotch people?"

"Yes—I like them very much," I replied, while mentally I was busy speculating. Had the handsome doctor anything to do with Louisa's coming for a year to Kensington to finish her education? If he had, the child was too innocent to know it; if she had given him her heart, it was in all simplicity and ignorance of her own feelings.

During the year Louisa spent with me she endeared herself to me and to all in the house by her sweet loving disposition and her extreme unselfishness; and when she departed, she seemed to take away half the sunshine from our home, while she herself wept in real sorrow; but she went away full of resolves to do her duty.

* * * * * *

Scarcely a month had elapsed after Louisa had left me when I was startled and pained by receiving the following telegram:

"The young person has eloped, and can only have gone to London. Sure to arrive about 8 P. M. Pray meet me at the station, and keep all quiet."

I set out immediately, presuming that I had to intercept poor Louisa and some lover—perhaps the handsome young doctor. I was sorely puzzled how to act, very unhappy about the unfortunate girl, and as we all have a worldly side, I must acknowledge that I felt rather anxious as to the effect her escapade might have on my own fortunes, or rather those of my household.

I stood for some time on the platform awaiting an overdue train. At length it steamed in, and a vast throng of passengers alighted from it. I eagerly scanned the groups of people, but could not see Louisa.

After a time I gave up hunting among the crowd and stood still, uncertain how to act. Everyone was gone, excepting a few third-class passengers who were waiting to claim their luggage.

At last I saw Louisa among them, and to my relief I found her alone. She was looking about her with a scared, bewildered face, and making no attempt to leave the platform. She was wrapped in an old Scotch plaid, wore a battered straw hat, and no gloves—indeed her whole appearance was dishevelled.

As I drew nearer I saw that her eyes were wild, and that her entire aspect was miserably pitiful and helpless. When she saw me she exclaimed:—

"Oh, auntie, auntie, I am so glad that

you are here! But how did it happen? For of course you didn't know I was coming. You are out for your evening walk, I suppose? Oh, take me home—take me home!"

"Your luggage, child?"

"Luggage!" she repeated, as if she did not understand.

"Your trunks, my dear?"

"Oh, I have none! I have nothing in the world—not a penny in my pocket—and I've had nothing to eat all day. The clerk at the station lent me the money for the ticket. Do you know what I've come for, auntie?"

"No, indeed, dear child."

"I have come to ask you to let me be your servant. I can never go back—never, never!"

I hurried her to a cab, first giving her a cake and some lemonade at the buffet. As we drove to my house I asked her no questions, though I longed to know if Doctor Fergus Grahame was in any way connected with what had happened. She seemed to divine my thoughts, for she volunteered the information.

"Doctor Grahame went away from our place long ago, or I should have gone to him. He is a good man; he would have told me what to do."

It was useless to talk to her; the hand that rested in mine was burning with fever, and before our drive ended she was delirious. I got her to bed as quickly as possible, and summoned a doctor immediately. He prescribed for her, shook his head, said he would call again very early in the morning, and desired that she should be watched carefully through the night, and soothed, if possible, into quietness.

Louisa talked incoherently all night; and, whatever conclusions I was tempted to draw from her wild words, I asked no questions, even when she became rational. That she had gone through some extraordinary experiences in her mother's house was certain; but what had been the trouble?

In reply to a telegram from me a letter soon arrived from Mrs. Dawson; but it threw no light upon the matter. She acknowledged the despatch I had sent to apprise her of her daughter's safety; for I had still been unwilling not to credit her with some motherly feeling, and I had hastened, as I supposed, to relieve her natural anxiety.

The letter was about the most heartless I ever read in my life. She told me that she relied on me to save the honor of their family name by imparting to no human being what I had heard or might hear from Louisa, who had behaved in such a way as to disgrace herself and all belonging to her.

She was never to enter their doors again; they meant to consider her dead—indeed they had reason to hope that she soon would be so, and that the grave would hide the only blot that had ever rested upon the name of Dawson.

A medical man had lately seen her, and, on examination, had declared her lungs were seriously affected. Meanwhile she was to be well punished; she was to have no luxuries—indeed no indulgence whatever. Money enough for her bare subsistence would be sent to me, if I chose to trouble myself with her for the present, until they had decided on her final disposition.

I did my best to mediate, but I might as well have appealed to a granite wall. I tried reasoning, expostulation; all and everything were vain. Louisa continued very ill. I had had, however, much experience in illness of every kind, and I had nursed many consumptive patients, but I saw little in common between my present charge and former patients. At Mrs. Dawson's request two physicians consulted—very eminent specialists—Dr. Shepherd and another.

The great men pronounced authoritatively that Louisa was consumptive, and had been so for some time; while some lesser authorities hastened to agree; so the poor girl was condemned to death. I then begged her mother's permission to allow me to take her with me to the seaside. She answered that I might take her to the end of the world if I chose, provided no additional expense would be incurred.

So Louisa and I set out for Folkestone, where I secured board for her and myself for one month in the house of a medical friend of mine, and the good doctor made a perfect cure of his patient before the end of the season.

Strange to say, though frankness itself as regarded all other matters, my charge gave me no explanation as to what had happened in her own home to cause her to take flight. On my side I refrained from asking her any questions; but now and then I tried to impress upon her that she had been very wrong to forsake home and friends.

"Ah, if you only knew!" was her sole answer.

The mystery remained unsolved—it remains so still; though I strongly suspect that the girl had proved a dangerous rival to her mother in one or more quarters, and had probably in all unconsciousness excited the passionate jealousy of a vain heartless woman. I could not refrain however, from asking her if Doctor Grahame had seen her before he left, and whether he had examined her chest.

"Oh, no!" she answered. "He would have known better."

I brought Louisa back to town. After a great deal of persuasion, and after setting before her all I could think of to touch her heart and conscience, she promised me that she would go home and be submissive and dutiful; but it cost her a great effort and many tears—indeed it was quite painful to witness her distress.

"I wrote immediately to Mrs. Dawson, for I still labored under the delusion that Nature would make any mother rejoice that her child had been snatched back from the grave, to which she had been condemned on the highest medical authority.

I wrote as I felt—grieved to part from the girl who had grown inexpressibly dear to me, yet anxious to make peace between mother and daughter. I told Mrs. Dawson that Louisa was very penitent, and would henceforth prove her sorrow for her sin by acting as a good dutiful daughter.

By return post I received an answer which gave me a fresh shock.

"Do not attempt to send that girl home; I will not have her. It is a great disappointment to me to hear that she has apparently recovered. I mean to send another medical man to see her, and his opinion will decide future movements."

When the doctor in question called at my house and sent in his card, I was horrified to read the name of a well-known specialist for lunacy cases. I saw him immediately. He was a short thick set man, not of gentlemanly appearance or of prepossessing countenance; he had a well-shaped head, but it gave no indication of benevolence or conscientiousness.

His eyes were very peculiar, neither bright nor penetrating, but "shifty," as from cunning, and dull, as from weariness. There was nothing in his appearance to inspire confidence, but much to intimidate the inexperienced.

After a formal "Good morning," Doctor Fabricius Fortinbras said—

"I suppose, madam, you have been apprised that I should call to examine into Miss Dawson's state?"

"I certainly heard, sir, that I was to expect a visit from a medical man on Miss Dawson's account. But, frankly, your card surprised me, as I had no idea that your speciality lay in the way of chest affections, real or supposed."

"Of course I have nothing to do with chest complaints! I am here to examine into the young lady's mental condition."

"Her mental condition!" I exclaimed. "Gracious Heaven! There is nothing wrong with the poor child—nothing whatever! Indeed she is now perfectly sane in every respect."

"That remains to be proven," said Dr. Fortinbras. "Her mother informs me that her conduct has been such as to warrant the supposition that her brain was affected. Let me see her at once, please; my time is valuable."

I rang the bell. Meanwhile Dr. Fortinbras curiously examined the books that lay on the table, murmuring to himself:—

"No wonder young people go wrong if their preceptors let them have the run of such works as these!"

As he spoke he almost thrust two volumes in my face; they happened to be Longfellow's poems and The Caxtons.

"Sir!" said I indignantly, "you have never read those books!"

"Of course I have never read them; far be it from me to trouble my brains with such trash."

"You have not read them, yet you dare to condemn two of the noblest books ever written!"

"Ah, madam, you're—yes, you're a woman; and you attempt to reason, which of course, none of your sex can do. Women are all more or less afflicted with amentia. Now I dare say you don't even know what that means!"

At that moment Louisa entered, looking frightened but so charming that I could not help thinking that even this hard man would be touched by the sight of her sweet face.

But no, it did not move him. He gave her a sharp glance, then requested me to leave him alone with his patient.

I knew I must comply, but I did so most reluctantly, for the poor child looked at me piteously. Anyway I determined to remain close at hand.

It was well I did, for after ten minutes had elapsed, the girl rushed from the room, crying out:

"Oh, auntie, why did you leave me alone with that dreadful man? He has—oh, he has asked me such awful questions!"

I sent Louisa to my sister's to be soothed and comforted, as I knew she would be, while I returned to Doctor Fabricius Fortinbras, determined to remonstrate with him were he five times the great man the world proclaimed him to be.

"Sir," I exclaimed, "on what grounds have you dared to terrify that unfortunate girl as you have done?"

"Dared, madam? Do you know who I am?"

"Oh, yes; I have seen your card!"

"And you venture to speak so to me—to me—a man in my position, with my reputation, and you—you nothing but an obscure schoolmistress!"

"I am not the person really concerned, Doctor Fortinbras. You know you are acting unjustifiably—you know that the moment your eyes fell upon Miss Dawson you recognised in her nothing but perfect sanity!"

He stared at me blankly for a few moments, then said to himself:

"It's of no use getting angry. She's a woman—a mere woman." Then to me—"My good creature, you are laboring under a delusion—indeed Mrs. Dawson told me you were. You fancy that you have a young heiress to deal with, and that you will presently have the handling of her money; but you're wrong—quite wrong. The Dawson's estate is entailed on the next male heir, who is a cousin. They have no sons. It is true that they have plenty of money apart from the land, but Mr. Dawson always does exactly what his wife tells him to do.

"She'll not let this girl have a penny beyond enough for bare subsistence. You'll gain nothing by opposing her mother. On the contrary, you'll cut your own nose off if you do so. When this girl is disposed of there will be three others to be 'finished,' as they say, and no doubt you will get them if you show yourself amenable."

I looked at Doctor Fortinbras, my indignation for a time preventing all utterance. At last I managed to speak.

"Sir, my own conscience being clear, I am indifferent to the opinion of strangers, who are welcome to judge me by themselves. The question at present is about Miss Dawson. It is evident that there is some plan being concocted to deprive her of her liberty. Do you mean to say that she is mad?"

"Well, no—not exactly; but she will soon be ready to be certificated."

"And meantime?"

"We shall place someone near her with authority."

"A keeper, sir?"

"We shall call her a lady's maid. One doesn't like to be coarse, you know. In three months she will probably be in an asylum."

"That is your conclusion?"

"Yes, that is my conclusion, and will be yours when you have thought over your own interests. In three months the girl will be in such a condition that there will be no difficulty as to certifying her."

"Dr. Fortinbras, hear me——"

"No occasion, madam. When you are cool enough to think you will see where your interests lie—find out, in fact, on which side your bread's buttered."

"Doctor Fortinbras, I shall make all this public," I replied.

"And if you do, will the world believe a petty schoolmistress in preference to a wealthy lady of an old country family?" And Doctor Fortinbras chuckled as he walked out.

Again I wrote to Mrs. Dawson. I knew how useless it was to appeal to her feelings, for she had none. I knew she desired to get rid of her daughter, so I offered to adopt her without fee or reward, and to guarantee that she should not cease to be any expense to her family, but should never in any way trouble them again. That was refused. No; she was to be punished.

I suggested that, at a very trifling expense, she could board with the good Doctor at Folkestone and his wife. No—she disliked those people. They would make her life too pleasant; she must be punished. And punished Louisa was, most cruelly.

I had two or three more interviews with Doctor Fortinbras, with much the same result. He tried very hard to shake my integrity, and I really think he believed that every man or woman had his or her price. Certainly he had his.

My poor Louisa wept and besought me not to give her up, but I was powerless. Had I stood alone in the world, had not strong and stern duties to my own people restrained me, I am sure I would have run away with the poor child and hidden her in some out-of-the-way place. As it was, I could not do battle with a rich country family, supported as they were by the authority of a well-known medical specialist.

One dark cold rainy day, when the sky was as gloomy as the poor girl's fortunes, a cab drove up to my door, containing an ill-looking man and two ill looking women.

The three literally tore Louisa from the shelter of my arms and house, and bore her almost fainting away. Had she been my own child I do not think I could have felt the shock more, uncertain as I was as to her future fate.

I tried every possible means to trace what had become of her; but all my efforts were baffled. Such "sinews of war" as I had were insufficient to overcome the obstacles that lay in my way. Three weeks of intolerable suspense followed. I could learn nothing, though I made strenuous efforts to get information, and indeed made great sacrifice also.

Late one evening a telegram came from Paris, of all the places in the world, and the telegram was from Louisa.

[TO BE CONCLUDED IN THE NEXT.]

A Double Rescue.

BY T. L. B.

"YES, Marian, if you love me, prove it by meeting me under the old oak tree, the other side of the village of Birtley, when we will go at once to the parish clerk's, and see about putting up the banns."

He completed the sentence with a kiss.

Marian blushed crimson, her bosom heaved, and there was a half-smile playing round her cherry lips; at the same time there were tears in her eyes.

"Frank," she said, "is this not hasty? I would rather you gave me time to make preparations."

He looked displeased.

"Perhaps your heart tells you are going against your inclinations," said Frank Farleigh, gloomily; "perhaps, in short, Willie Greville has made such an impression on you that your feelings towards me have changed."

The speaker was a tall, handsome, but dark-looking young man of twenty-five, representing himself as a lawyer, who had for a year past been rather steadily visiting Marian Vere, a beautiful young lady, the daughter of a wealthy merchant residing in the village of St. Mildred's.

On the present occasion she and Farleigh were strolling through a grove about a quarter of a mile from her home, and equally as far from that of Willie Greville, a rich young farmer, who lived on the other side of the grove, and who had lately become one of Marian's ardent suitors.

Farleigh, unfortunately, was of a rather jealous disposition, and was constantly haunted with the fear that during his absence Greville would gain an advantage over him as his rival.

"Frank," said Marian, in answer to his last remark, "how often have I assured you that Mr. Greville can never be more to me than a friend? As the friend of my father, I must, of course, treat him civilly."

"Your father favors him, at all events," said Farleigh.

"To tell the truth, I think he does; but that can matter nothing to me. Moreover, he would not attempt to influence my choice, as he has always said that his child should choose for herself. Still, Frank, I would ask you to give me a little time."

"I leave for the city in a week or two," answered Frank; "and that is why I am

in so great a hurry to have our union take place."

"Be it so, then," she answered, blushing scarlet.

As she spoke a deep sigh escaped her.

Frank heard it with uneasiness; but, determined not to show the feeling, this time he kissed her good-bye, and they parted, with the understanding that Marian should meet her lover at nine o'clock on the following morning under the old oak tree the other side of the village of Birtley.

At half-past eight the next morning Marian started.

Greville had called the evening before, and had actually proposed to her, when she had frankly told him that she could never feel anything but friendship towards him, as she loved another.

He had gone away looking so miserable that Marian had sincerely pitied him, while, knowing that there was a taint of insanity in his family, she had feared that he might destroy himself.

It was this fear which had made her sigh, on the evening before, when she gave her consent to Frank's proposal, for she had a kind heart, and she could deeply pity those towards whom she was otherwise indifferent.

The distance to the village of Birtley was about a mile, and there was but one house on the way. This part of the country was very lonely, containing fields and thickets which were seldom visited.

The houses alluded to stood near the edge of a small grove. It was a small, two story cottage, round which Marian at this time could discern no sign of a human being.

At length, however, she heard the cry of a child, and presently saw a little girl, about four years old, run out and stood watching her as she was about to pass the house.

"How do you do, little Gertie?" said Marian, kindly, for she knew the child and her parents. "And how are papa and mamma?"

"Very well," said the little girl, standing on tiptoe. "But papa and mamma have gone away to Birtley, and won't be back till night, and they have left me to take care of the house."

Marian shrugged her shoulders, thinking that the parents were very careless to leave such a wee thing all alone.

"Do you think it will rain?" inquired Gertie, looking up at the sky.

"I think it will, soon," answered Marian.

"I am so glad," replied the little girl; "for our cistern is almost dry, and the rain may fill it up again."

Marian, glancing up at the clouds gathering along the sky, was about hurrying along, fearful of being caught in a shower, when she saw the child run to the cistern and peer down into it.

She leaned so far over that Marian uttered a cry of affright, and was about warning her, when over went little Girtie headlong into the cistern.

Marian, trembling with fear, rushed into the yard, and looking down into the cavity, discovered to her horror that Gertie was drowning, there being three feet of water in the cavity—enough to cover the head of a child of her stature.

Without a moment's hesitation Marian let herself down into the cistern—a distance of nine feet.

She caught up Gertie and held her in her arms, shouting with all her might, faintly hoping that some person might be passing and hear.

Finally the little girl regained her breath.

"It will rain, and we shall both be drowned."

Marian glanced round her at the smooth, cemented sides of the cavity, and saw no way of getting out.

At the same moment she felt a few drops of rain fall upon her face through the opening above.

What should she do?

There seemed no possible way of escape.

Fortunately, there was a board in the cistern, upon which she could station the little girl, holding on to her in the meantime.

The board, however, was far too short to be made available for getting out of the place.

The rain commenced to fall faster. Marian continued to shout, but there was no response; and now the drops were heard pattering fast upon the ground above.

Soon the water began to trickle through the spout leading into the cistern.

The stream grew larger every moment, and the noise it made falling into the cistern sounded like a knell upon the ears of the poor girl.

It was, indeed, fearful to see the stream coming down, rapidly increasing the depth of the water.

Soon it was up to Marian's waist. She redoubled her cries—still in vain. There was no response save the dismal pattering of the rain and the sighing of the wind through the trees.

Little Gertie began to cry with affright, while both she and her champion shivered with cold.

Marian, although her own heart beat loud and fast with terror, endeavored to soothe the little one.

A more trying situation than theirs can hardly be imagined, for the water was steadily rising, and must in a short time reach over Marian's head.

Suddenly a thought struck her.

If she could only get up high enough to stop up the spout hole, they might be saved.

But how could she do this?

The hole in the spout was at least three feet above her.

She looked at Gertie.

By raising the child in her arms could it not reach the spout and stuff something in it.

She gave the little one the necessary instructions, then pulled the shawl from her shoulders, and putting it in the child's hands, she raised her up in her arms.

Gertie stuffed the shawl in the earthen spout, and this stopped the water from coming.

"We are saved!" exclaimed the young lady, covering her with kisses.

"Yes, and papa and mamma will come soon and take us out," answered the delighted child.

Marian again began to shout, doing so until she was so hoarse that she could not utter another word.

About a quarter of an hour had passed, when suddenly both were startled by a report like that of a cannon, when, to her dismay, Marian perceived that the rushing pent-up water gathering in the earthen spout had caused it to burst.

The situation of the twain was now even more perilous than before, for the water now poured into the cistern with redoubled velocity, and in a larger stream than it did ere the cistern was stopped up.

Gertie, clinging to Marian, shrieked with terror; but the young woman, procuring her shawl, gave it to the little girl, and soothing her, again raised her in her arms to stop up the new opening.

Alas! Gertie was unable to thrust the shawl into the aperture, owing to the added force of the water, which now came so as to thrust away the impediment as fast as it was placed.

"Heaven help us!" murmured Marian, obliged to abandon the attempt.

And the unobstructed water, hissing and gurgling, poured faster and faster into the cistern, till poor Marian found herself submerged to her neck.

She glanced up, despairingly, but saw no sign of the cessation of the rain, and she gave herself up as lost.

Silently she prayed Heaven to give her strength to meet her impending fate like a Christian; but she trembled with terror even while she prayed.

Higher and higher rose the water.

Soon it was up to her chin, and she could now scarcely keep on her feet.

Only a few minutes more between her and eternity.

Meanwhile, almost overpowered with fear, she endeavored to keep the little girl upon the board.

The child was now so frightened that she was as pale as death, while her eyes, rolling in her head, seem to be threatening spasms.

The water rising higher, was nearly to Marian's lips.

Still she held on to the little girl, struggling to keep her in her place.

Meanwhile she made one last effort to make herself heard; but her cries were almost smothered by the rising water.

Up! up! still up!

Now it was over her lips, ringing and hissing in her ears, and she felt that she must go down.

Impulsively she clutched the board, but perceiving that it was not heavy enough to bear her weight, and that she would thus draw the child under, she let go her hold, bidding the little one cling to the board, and she, at least would be saved.

Marian then sank beneath the surface, giving herself up for lost.

As she went under, however, she felt something brush against her.

The next moment she was seized and drawn out of the water, and up through the cistern in an almost fainting condition.

She opened her eyes to find herself and Gertie safe in the cottage.

The little girl's parents had come back sooner than they had expected to do, and hearing Marian's cries, had got to the cistern just in time to save her by means of a ladder, which the man thrust into the cavity.

Dry garments were now supplied Marian.

"There's quite an excitement in Birtley this morning," said the woman, "over the arrest of a person you know—Mr. Farleigh."

"What?" gasped Marian. "Why was he arrested?"

"Well, it has turned out that he was a mere sharper and adventurer, and not a lawyer, as he has represented. He was arrested for forgery and embezzlement. He has been carrying on an ingenious system of swindling all he had business with."

Marian heard no more, but fell down in a swoon.

For weeks she lay in a brain fever, and for months after was so weak that she was not expected to live.

Meanwhile, undisputed proof of Frank's guilt having been advanced, he was sentenced to a lengthened term of imprisonment.

Day after day Mr. Vere, watching his daughter, saw her grow paler and thinner.

He had said, when he learned the affair of the cistern, that there was no evil without good; for this had saved her from marrying the scoundrel Farleigh. But his heart sank to see his poor child gradually fading before him.

Thanks to a good constitution, however, she recovered, but was never as light-hearted as formerly.

After a time Willie Greville renewed his suit, and this time with more success, though the first love of her young heart had been given to Frank Farleigh; but she is happy enough in her husband and children's love, and all who know her admire and respect her.

HOLLY AND ROSEMARY.—The holly is a plant of peculiar veneration at this period of the year—so much so as to have acquired to itself, by a popular metonymy, the name of the season itself—being often called "Christmas." It is, no doubt, recommended to the general estimation in which it is held, by the picturesque form of its dark glossy leaves, and the brilliant clusters of its rich red berries.

There is a very striking carol, of so remote a date as the reign of Henry VI., which is quoted by most of the writers on this subject—and gives a very poetical statement of the respective claims of this plant and of the ivy to popular regard. The inference would seem to be, that, while the former was employed in the decorations within doors, the latter was confined to the exterior of buildings. Mr. Brand, however, considers those passages to allude to its being used as a vintner's sign; and infers, from others of the verses, that it was also, amongst the evergreens employed at funerals.

The rosemary, besides its rich fragrance—and probably because thereof—was supposed to possess many occult virtues; and was used, for the sake of one or another of them, on occasions both of rejoicing and of mourning. It was believed to clear the head, to strengthen the memory, and to make touching appeals to the heart. For these reasons, it was borne both at weddings and at funerals.

"There's rosemary," said Ophelia, "that's for remembrance; pray you, love, remember;" and the custom of decking the corpse with this flower, as well as that of flinging its sprigs into the grave, would naturally spring out of this touching superstition.

Its presence at bridals would seem to suggest that it was dedicated to hope, as well as memory. We have, in Shakspeare's play of "Romeo and Juliet," allusions to the very frequent use of this herb, on both of these very important, yet different occasions, which allusions are affecting, from the application of both to the same young girl. The first—which refers only to the joyous celebration,—occurs in an interview between Romeo and the nurse of Juliet,—in which arrangements are making for the secret marriage; where the garrulous old woman observes, as hinting at Juliet's willingness,—"she hath the prettiest sententious of it, of you and rosemary, that it would do you good to hear it." The second is in that scene in which Juliet is supposed to be dead.

Scientific and Useful.

NOTHING CAN RESIST THEM.—Shells filled with frozen dynamite are one of the most recent inventions for killing people. The inventor declares that these projectiles when fired will smash anything into little bits, whether it be a wooden box or an ironclad. The frozen dynamite is packed in the cavity of the shell, and does not explode until the missile strikes an object. Another entirely new feature of the missile is a slow burning fuse, sufficiently insulated from the charge to prevent premature explosion while the shell is traversing the designated distance. At a recent trial, a shell went clean through a three-inch steel plate at a range of one hundred yards and then exploded, shattering the plate to bits.

QUITE NOVEL.—Stiffened cement has recently been used successfully in the construction of a boat. The frame is of steel bars a third of an inch in diameter, over which is spread a wire netting. On this the cement is laid, and the outer surface is polished. The boat is heavier than if it were built of wood, but is cheaper, and slips better through the water. Experiments have proved its strength.

ARTIFICIAL IVORY.—One of the uses of skimmed milk is in the manufacture of an artificial ivory, which in most respects resembles the original. The milk is mixed with borax and subjected to a high pressure. The product is well suited for combs, billiard balls and pipe mouthpieces.

Farm and Garden.

THE HORSE.—It is not proper to trim the hair that grows in the ear of a horse. Nature intended it to protect the orifice from dust, insects, etc., and sudden atmospheric changes.

CHALK IN MILK.—To detect chalk in milk, dilute the milk with water; the chalk, if there be any, will settle to the bottom in an hour or two; put to the sediment an acid—vinegar, for instance—and if effervescence take place, it is chalk.

EGGS IN TREACLE.—In Jamaica and other West India islands, they have a very curious way of preserving eggs for a considerable length of time. A layer of eggs is placed at the bottom of a barrel and then the ordinary treacle is poured over them in sufficient quantity to entirely cover them. Then another layer of eggs is added, and more treacle applied, and so on till the barrel is full. The idea is that an egg can be kept good almost indefinitely if the air can be prevented penetrating the porous shell to the contents within. When the eggs are used, the treacle is boiled up and is thoroughly saleable again. In Northern Russia farmers use warm tallow in the same way, but this is said to slightly affect the flavor of the eggs.

During February of this year I contracted a severe cold which caused me to cough continuously. I commenced using Jayne's Expectorant, which gave me instant relief and speedily effected a permanent cure. I have had no return of the symptoms.—DAVID L. BARKER, Deputy, Indiana, Oct. 4, 1895.

300 GIRLS HAVE BEEN EDUCATED FREE

And we are willing to educate 300 more girls, or young men. Sex makes no difference, nor where you want to go, nor what you want to study. The offer is free, and the same for everybody. No chance element.

The Ladies' Home Journal

Philadelphia

WELCOME AND GOOD WILL.

BY B. W.

Oh, blessed day! Of days the gem,
That saw the Saviour's birth;
That gave the Babe of Bethlehem
To ransom fallen earth;
To vanquish Death and make us free,
And from the grave wrest victory.

Again we greet this holy morn,
The day that hath no peer,
Whose glories shine, in light divine,
Through each revolving year,
And gladden all the grateful world
Where Christ's broad banner is unfurled.

Unnumbered millions bid it hail,
And welcome with good-will;
Where'er he be, on land or sea,
Man holds it sacred still,
While earth, with song and merry chime,
Salutes this noblest day of Time.

Throughout all Christian lands to-day
Sweet peace and joy shall reign,
And love and gratitude have sway,
And hearts feel less of pain,
And souls with heavy sorrows bent
Will see the Cross and find content.

FOR HIM ALONE.

BY B. M. C.

CHAPTER IX.

"LADY CULMORE was laid to sleep by her husband's side, and I wrote for prolonged leave of absence. It not the heir to the estate, I was the agent for it—steward for the little child and his rights. The leave of absence was granted, and I was very busy.

"There was much to do in settling the affairs of the estate. Ulric came down to help me whenever he could. I grew to love my fair little nephew; I used to call him the chieftain.

"I made it a practice to kneel by the pretty cot where he slept and pray for him. I liked to go there in the morning and at night. A tender passionate love was growing in my heart for the baby-heir, my dead brother's son.

"True, the little fellow had deprived me of title, estate, and wealth; but I did not seem to love him one jot the less. The nurse smiled when she saw me kneeling by the cot, kissing the little hand. I always like to remember that one day she said to me:

"'You are a good man, sir. Excuse me, but some gentlemen would hate a child who had come between them and such a property.'

"I laughed, for this seemed absurd and contemptible. Hate that fair, tender little creature, whose father was my own brother! Oh, no, never! Rather would I love and cherish him. One morning Nest and myself were standing by the little cot, and she said to me:

"'What a fragile tender life it is! And to think that this is all that stands between you and fortune!'

I kissed her beautiful upturned face.

"Do not encourage such thoughts, much less utter them, Nest," I said.

"Nevertheless it does seem strange, Rudolph," she persisted, "that such a tiny child should deprive you of everything."

"We were all tiny children once upon a time," I replied.

"I knew that Nest cried at times over what seemed the hardness of our fate. There was no prospect of our marriage for some time yet.

"One morning Mrs. Jennings told me that the child was not well, and a little later a letter came from headquarters, saying that our regiment was ordered abroad, though not on active service.

"The news was almost a death-blow to Nest. She clung to me, poor child, weeping passionately. I must not go, she said; she would die if I left her. I soothed and calmed her. I told her that, if I went, she must remain, and take good care of the little heir. I shall never forget her anguish at the thought of our separation.

"I must hasten to the end of my story. The child got worse during the day, and the next morning he was dead. The doctor said he had died in convulsions, and added that the little one was so delicate that he had never really thought he would live.

"The nurse was overwhelmed with grief. It struck me afterwards, although I did not think much of it at the time, that she never looked me in the face when she spoke of the child.

"The little heir was dead. I thanked Heaven, as I stood by the little one's side, that even in my thoughts I had never wished him harm, that I had never for one moment grudged him his rich inheritance, nor felt that he was in my way."

Sir Rudolph paused for a few moments, looking earnestly on the face of his dead wife. Then he turned to us again.

"When the child died, you remember, Ulric, I sent at once for you. I succeeded to the title and estate. I was sorry for the child; but it had been such a fragile life that I did not greatly mourn.

"We buried the little one. Nest then went back to her aunt, and it was arranged that she should remain with her until we were married. I did not think it strange that she should suggest taking the nurse, Martha Jennings, with her. The woman professed great attachment to her, while Nest seemed to rely greatly on her.

"Nor, when we were married, did I think it strange that Nest should want to bring the nurse with her to Brooke Hall. I imagined that she liked her for my little nephew's sake, and that the child formed a tie between them which women only could understand.

"The cloud caused by so many deaths hung over us for some time, and then gradually we learned to look back on the past with calmness. We were young, and I was more happy with my wife than words can tell. You know, both of you, how she loved me. I think no man in the world was ever more beloved.

"I remember that my first sensation of uneasiness arose from noticing how completely Nest was under the control of the nurse; and I did not altogether like the woman's manner to her.

"More than once I found my wife in tears, and when I inquired the reason she put me off with an evasive answer. Yet, Heaven knows, these were but trifles which brought me no gleam of suspicion of the reality to come.

"I wish," continued Sir Rudolph, "that I were not compelled to tell you the rest. I do so only by her command, now that she is dead. I would fain bury her secret with her, poor misguided Nest!

"I must confess now that there were times when I felt uneasy about Nest. She was so changed. She seemed to love me, if possible, more than ever. She was most devoted to me, but she puzzled me. She was abstracted, and did not seem quite sure of herself.

"About a week before Christmas day Mrs. Jennings was taken suddenly ill. Nest seemed much distressed. We sent for the doctor from Avonsleigh, and he pronounced her to be in great danger. At first no one thought much of her illness, nor did we say anything before our friends—the house was filled with guests—lest they should be nervous.

"One of the housemaids undertook to nurse her, and we hoped for the best. At nine o'clock in the morning of Christmas Eve, I was as happy as any one in England. I rose from the breakfast table, after making plans for the day with my guests.

"Nest met me in the hall, where the men-servants had just placed a great bunch of mistletoe. I took up a spray, and held it over Nest's head. As I saw her face then I never beheld it before. I kissed the lips that had never worn anything but the sweetest smiles for me, and at the same moment the housemaid who was in attendance on the sick woman came to me."

"Sir Rudolph," she said, "Mrs. Jennings bade me ask you if you would go to her. She is much worse, and she wants to see you."

"I was on the point of saying that I would go at once, when I saw a terrible change came over my wife's face. She looked for one moment as though she was going to faint. She clasped my arm and said:—

"'You must not go, Rudolph. It is only a woman's fancy.'

"I cannot refuse the poor creature. I must go, Nest," I said.

"'You shall not!' she cried desperately; and she clung to me with such earnestness that I could hardly free myself from her grasp.

"'Why do you wish me not to see her, Nest?' I asked.

"'Because she is wicked and malicious,' was the answer. 'She will tell you anything. She has mad fancies. Oh, Rudolph, beloved, for Heaven's sake, do not go near her!'

There was something startling in her manner. I could not understand it. Was she afraid for herself, or for me?

"I cannot refuse the request of a dying woman," I said, more sternly than I had ever spoken to her before; "but you can come with me, Nest."

She shrank back, shuddering.

"No, no!" she cried.

"Then let me go alone, and you can trust me."

I shall never forget the despair on her face when I left her. I shall never forget the cry that came from her lips.

"I shall not be long, Nest," I said, very gently.

I knew where the sick woman was lying, and I hastened thither. I found the nurse at the point of death. A servant was sitting with her; and the sick woman looked at me with an imploring face.

"Send her away, Sir Rudolph," she said. "I want to speak to you."

The woman went and we were left alone.

"Sir Rudolph," said the nurse, "I know before I speak that the words I have to say will break your heart. I meant to die without uttering them, but I cannot. I dare not depart with this secret undisclosed. I—I must confess the truth."

"Certainly," I said. "If you have anything on your mind, you had better tell me."

"Ah, sir," she says pityingly, "it will break your heart. You will never be happy again—I know you so well, sir; and yet, if I die without telling you, I feel I shall never sleep in my grave. I could not rest; I should come back from the dead to tell you."

"Tell me now," I said, for her words had excited in me a certain horror that I could not endure—"tell me at once!"

She beckoned for me to come closer to her and I did so. She raised her hand and I placed my ear to her lips.

"I dare not speak aloud," she said. "Even the walls have ears and they might hear me. What I have to say is a fatal secret that you must tell to no one. Another life hangs on it. Sir Rudolph, your wife, Lady Culmore, poisoned the little baby-heir herself."

I started from her with a feeling of loathing and horror impossible to describe. My fair gentle Nest slay that little tender babe! I was filled with anger.

"You are raving!" I cried. "It is a mad, wicked fancy!"

"Sir," she said calmly, "it is the truth—the plain simple truth; and I can die easily now that I have told it. Sir, as surely as heaven is above us, Lady Culmore killed the child. I saw her do it with my own eyes. I will tell you; you shall judge for yourself."

"There was no help for it. I was compelled to listen, and had begun to fear—ah me, how terrible!

"You remember," she said, "that the baby was taken ill, and that we nursed him assiduously, no one more tenderly, more kindly than Miss Nest. The night he died we were rather anxious about him, and Miss Hazlewood said she would sit by his cot while I went down to supper.

"I was quite willing. I went to see if the child was all right. He was fast asleep, and looked, to my thinking, better; there was more color in the fair little face. As I left the room, Sir Rudolph, I was struck by the peculiar expression on Miss Hazlewood's face.

"I could not describe it—a cruel look it seemed to me. I went downstairs, but Miss Hazlewood's look haunted me. Not that I had any fear; I would rather have suspected a saint of doing harm to the child than Miss Hazlewood.

"I could not rest downstairs. I went back. I saw Miss Hazlewood on her knees by the side of the cradle. She held a little bottle in one hand and a spoon in the other. As I walked in at the door, I saw her, with a steady hand, drop two drops from the bottle into the spoon.

"Then, before I could cross the room, before I had time to speak, the child had swallowed the contents of the teaspoon. I caught her, as I may say, red-handed. She neither saw nor heard me, she was so deeply engrossed in giving the child the fatal dose. I sprang forward.

"What are you doing?" I cried.

For a moment she seemed almost paralised with fear.

"What are you doing?" I cried again, almost beside myself.

"Giving baby his medicine," she said. "It is just time."

She tried to hide the bottle, but I would not let her, and in the struggle she let it fall. The contents were spilled on the pillow. I picked up the bottle. On it was a label with the one terrible word—'Poison.'

"You dropped some of this into the teaspoon!" I cried. "You guilty, miserable woman, you have killed the poor little child!"

She did not deny it. She fell at my feet, grovelling, crying out that it was such a fragile little life, and that it parted you from her. She clung to me with cries and tears. She told me that your regiment was ordered abroad, and that it would be years before you could return and marry her—long years—but that, if the child died, and you succeeded to the baronetcy, you would be obliged to sell out, and then you would marry her at once.

"And I love him so!" she cried, plaintively. "I love him so dearly!" That was all she kept repeating—"I love him so dearly!"

It was a terrible scene, sir—the child already dead in his cot, and the beautiful lady, with her white despairing face, crouched on the ground.

"I could not let him go!" she moaned. "He has been so faithful, so loyal, so good; he has loved so long and so well. Every one else's love prospers.

"Why should we spend half the best years of our lives apart? He might die abroad, he whom I love with my whole heart. And it was only this one little life, so fragile, so weak, that stood between him and wealth."

She bent over the little one's body.

"See," she cried; "it has not suffered; it breathed only for a short space and then died. A few minutes ago it was a weak, struggling little creature, now it is a bright angel in heaven. I have done no serious wrong. I have set the little soul free, and I need not part from my love. I have given him fortune, wealth, all that my heart desired for him."

The law will tell a different story, Miss Hazlewood," I said. "In the eyes of the law, as well as before Heaven, the life of a little child is as sacred as that of a grown-up person."

"Do you know, Sir Rudolph," said the nurse, "I do not think up to that time she had looked upon the deed as murder. She had thought only of herself and her love. She had never thought of the fact that she had put herself within the power of the law. If you had but seen her when I told her that she had committed a murder and deserved to be hanged. To prove the truth of all I say, sir, look at this. I have saved it from that time to this."

She drew from beneath her pillow a little bottle, with the word Poison on the label of it, and a frilled white linen pillow-case in which holes had been burned.

"You can tell how deadly the poison was when you see that it has burned the linen in this fashion," said the nurse. "But the child did not suffer one minute; it died at once. Well, sir, Miss Hazlewood cried, wept, prayed, pleaded, until at last I promised not to tell her secret. But I cannot keep it in death."

"How am I to know this story is true?" I asked. "These things you show me are no proof."

"A soul on the brink of eternity does not lie, sir. Lady Culmore paid me well to keep the secret, but I have very often been on the point of telling you."

"I do not believe you even now," I cried.

"Look behind you, sir," she said; "you will read the truth there."

I glanced in the direction in which she pointed, and there I saw my wife, standing with ghastly terror on her face and desperate fear in her eyes. I held up the bottle to her.

"Is it true?" I asked.

And she fell upon her knees, cowering as she cried out:

"Yes, it is true!"

"I cannot describe," continued Sir Rudolph, "my feelings of horror. Since the shock I have never been the same man. An hour later, I stood with my unfortunate wife in her boudoir, resolved that we should part that hour, never to meet again. I had loved her very dearly; but, when I knew that she had taken the life of that fair little child, loathing took the place of love.

I told her in grave, measured words, that we must part that night, never more to meet. I told her that the struggle in my heart was a hard one, that I felt inclined to deliver her up to justice and to the fate she deserved. But she was a woman, and my wife—I could not see her hanged. I hesitated, as it seemed to me, between two sins—screening a murderess, and giving up to justice the wife who had sinned for me.

If I talked to you forever, Ulric, Kate, I could not tell you all the details of that horrible scene. Poor, beautiful Nest. Her grief was terrible to witness. She clung to me, she knelt at my feet, she prayed and pleaded with such passionate despair that it might almost have moved a heart of stone.

What she had done had been done for love of me. What did that little fragile life matter? What was it in comparison with my fortune, with my love and hers? I saw that what the old nurse had said was true—she did not regard the deed she had committed as murder.

Ah, you cannot tell what it was to me to have the woman I had loved best in the world crouching in tears at my feet. This woman weeping, praying, was my darling Nest; the face I had loved, the white hands I had kissed and caressed, were those of a murderess, and that murderess was my wife.

Hour after hour passed on that terrible Christmas Eve. We were still together, and I was unable to decide what to do. I could not give her up to justice. She was my wife, and she had sinned for me; yet the murder was none the less a terrible one.

No man was ever more wretched or more bewildered. Poor Nest, how she loved me! She crouched at my feet in an agony of tears, and I could not raise her to comfort her—I could not soothe her. She was worn and exhausted with the passion of her grief.

"Do not send me from you, love!" she cried, in a voice like that of a dying woman. "Kill me, if you will. I should bless even death at your hands."

What was I to do? She had committed a cruel crime; she deserved punishment; yet, as she clung to my feet in tears, how could I decide?

"It was all for you, love," she moaned. "I could not bear that you should go across the sea. I have loved you so dearly and so long, it seemed as though we should never be happy."

"Happy! As though sin could ever lead to happiness!"

"I would have killed myself, Rudolph," she said, "to make you happy."

And I knew it was true. I could not give her up to justice, and I certainly could not take her to my heart again, although she had sinned for me.

We had been three hours together, when a sudden idea occurred to me. We could be husband and wife no more. I could never kiss the face of a murderess; I could never touch the hands that had taken the life of that fair little child. All was over between my once beloved Nest and me—over for ever.

But I could shield her in some measure. She should never, if I could help it, mix with the world again. The idea occurred to me to bring her to Ullamere—no place could be more out of the world—and to live out here the remainder of our sorrowful lives apart. I would keep her secret on those conditions. She must be content to live alone without friends or visitors.

For myself, so hot was my indignation that I swore I would never touch her hands again; and she promised that she would never even lay a finger on me. Poor Nest! She broke that promise only once.

We were to live together—that is, under one roof—but were to be further apart than strangers; more than the bitterness of death lay between us. She was never to approach my rooms, nor I hers. We were to speak only when necessity compelled us. So I hoped to compromise matters, to punish her for her sin, and in some measure to shield her from the consequences. Yet I felt that I had made a most miserable compromise.

I remember that she looked at me, a hopeless despair shining in her eyes.

"Rudolph," she said, "the sentence you have passed is heavier than the sentence of death; but I accept it and submit to it, coming from you."

Then came two or three days that I shall never forget, the abrupt breaking up of the party of friends, the surprise of the servants. Some of them I left in charge of Brooke; the two most faithful I brought here. I left orders for the funeral of the old nurse, who died a few hours after she had confessed that miserable secret to me—and then we came here.

Here we have lived since in the very depths of misery. I adhered strictly to the rules laid down. I could not forgive my wife her crime, although I knew it had been committed from love of me. Every day it grew more horrible in my eyes, and every day the distance between us increased.

Every time I saw those hands of hers I fancied them holding the fatal dose, until I—oh, may Heaven forgive me!—until I hated her. I never looked at her, I never heard the sound of her voice, without thinking of the little murdered child.

Only heaven knows the misery of our life. She asked me once to go with her to church at Ulladale, and I laughed in scorn. A vile criminal, and the man who had hidden the murder of a child, and that of his own brother's, at church! No; the bare idea was revolting to me.

I remember one morning she came to me and knelt at my feet. She prayed me to give her one kind word, and I repulsed her. She looked at me long and steadily.

"Rudolph," she said, "your conduct is right, no doubt; but I would far rather have been hanged!"

After that I noticed a great change in her. I do not think, frankly speaking, that she ever realized the enormity of her sin. I believe there had always been a faint hope in her heart that I should forgive her and take her back again, poor child!

The stories that I heard from the servants about her were so deplorable that I decided on finding a companion for her. Kate, who came as poor Nest's companion, will be your wife, Ulric; and may Heaven send you a happier lot than has fallen to me!

I could never tell you what I have suffered. When I have seen her most miserable, my heart has relented towards her, and I have longed to say a kind word to her; then my loathing returned, and I could not speak it.

Life has been nothing but torture for me and for her. Least of all could I bear to see her touch or speak to a child. She knew that, and in my presence never attempted it. What would have become of us had her death not taken place I cannot tell. It was better for her, better for me.

She sinned, but she suffered; through all the time of bitter estrangement she loved me as well and as passionately as ever. She tried to atone for her sin. How she pleaded to me that she might nurse the Rector's child!

"I took a life, beloved," she said, "for love of you; let me save one, and then Heaven may pardon me. If Heaven is merciful, you must be merciful."

That is her story. How do you judge her?

Closed forever were the lips that might have pleaded in self-defence, the eyes that had shed so many bitter tears. She could tell us nothing of the passion and love that had driven her mad; of her sorrow and despair, her torture and anguish. She lay silent. Heaven would judge her. Dare we?

Rudolph bent down and kissed her with burning tears.

"Who will judge her?" he asked.

No one replied.

"What flowers will you place in her hands, Kate?" said Ulric softly.

Ah, me; not the white roses of innocence or the red blossoms of guilt! In her golden hair, on her silent heart, I placed purple passion-flowers, the truest emblem of her.

* * * * * *

I am Lady Culmore now, for Sir Rudolph went back into the army, and was slain in battle in Africa. Then Ulric gave up the bar, and we were married, and went to live at Brooke.

The memory of the fair little child, of its young mother, of beautiful Nest, has faded now; but Ulric, more my lover than ever, since he has been my husband, says that, when he sees the mistletoe, the white berries look like tears upon it; and he will not have it near us at Christmas time.

But, though tears lie on the mistletoe, the berries on the holly are ruddily red as of old; and they, with the green laurels, tell the same happy story and seem to breathe to us the same good wish as always—"A merry Christmas and Happy New Year."

[THE END.]

The Season's Belle.

BY T. P.

"IS it nothing to you that my whole happiness lies at your mercy? Am I only one more of the many you have flirted with, and then smiled aside as if they were children? Ah! God never created any creature more cruel than a beautiful coquette without heart. Do not deny it.

"You have used every charm you possess to make me love you, and have succeeded. You shall listen to me now. I love you! I love you! I love you! Nay, do not speak. I will not take your final answer to-day. To-morrow, Christmas Eve I will come for it.

"Ah! if it is 'Yes,' I swear that you shall never regret it. If it is 'No,' then you will have sent one more man to perdition!" and without another word Jack Armstrong turned on his heel and left abruptly.

Hilda Phare looked after his retreating figure with a vague sense of shame. She had won the love of the "woman hater," but the victory was leaving a sting in even her hardened coquette conscience, though she tried to feel herself aggrieved at his outburst.

"As if I can help men falling in love with me! I cannot marry them all. I certainly do like Captain Armstrong, but I don't like matrimony. I want to keep my freedom a little longer yet. A pretty girl can at any time easily get engaged, but it requires an ugly girl to easily get disengaged, so that even beauty has its drawbacks," she concluded, with a little laugh.

Then, with the unconfessed desire to drive the recent interview from her mind, she took up a society paper and soon forgot all the crumpled rose leaves of her happy, careless life, in the pleasure of reading a description of the dress the "beautiful Miss Phare wore at the Queen's ball, where, as the belle of the gay season, she was to be the cynosure of all eyes."

"My dear Hilda, have you heard the dreadful news?"

The girl looked up from the comfortable wicker chair where she was reclining lazily under the shade of the old oak on the lawn.

"No; what news?" she asked, indifferently, for her portly aunt's face looked more important than horrified, as she stood by her niece's side, holding a large white and green lined sunshade over her bare head.

"Mrs. Chester shot her husband and that pretty Miss Dene yesterday afternoon, and then killed herself."

"O, how dreadful! What made her do it?" exclaimed Hilda, thoroughly roused now, as she sat bolt upright in her chair.

"Well, it appears that she caught him kissing this Miss Dene, to whom he had been engaged before he married his wife for her money. Fancy shooting both of them like that!"

"What a wicked, cruel woman Mrs. Chester must have been. It was only yesterday morning I rode over to Hill Hall to see her new Paris dress. It is quite horrible to think that I have touched the hand of a murderess," and the girl gave a shudder.

"Yes, it is indeed. I am so very sorry for their poor little daughter, but, of course, I can never allow Jessie and Pussie to play with her again. I must go now, for I want to write and tell your Aunt Mary all about it. She will be so interested—shocked, I mean," and she returned to the house with that feeling of pleasureable importance we all experience when we are the first to tell the news of some calamity that has befallen our friends.

Left to herself, Hilda sank back in the wicker chair and tried by reading to distract her thoughts once more, but this time from thinking of the tragedy at Hill Hall. The heat, however, made her drowsy, and the paper soon dropped on the grass from the nerveless fingers, and the lids soon dropped over the beautiful eyes.

Suddenly a choking sensation caught the sleeper's throat. She tried to move, but she could not. Was she dying—dying out there alone on the lawn? She felt her breath coming quicker and quicker, her strength ebbing faster and faster. Then she seemed to lose all consciousness.

* * * * * *

"Where was she now? Who were those?" she asked one standing beside her.

"They are the souls of the dead waiting till the day dawns and the golden gates are opened."

"Then I must be dead and those must be the gates of heaven, that beautiful place I used to like reading about when a child. I will join the throng and go in with them."

And when the day dawned, she also pressed forward towards those golden gates, guarded by angels, but though many passed through, more were turned away. At last only Hilda and another were left.

That other was a broken-hearted woman, and the girl shrank back with loathing when she saw it was Mrs. Chester. As she recoiled an angel beckoned to the weeping woman and she beheld her no more. But now the gates were closing. Hilda sprang forward and stretched out her hands to those white-robed guardians.

"You have forgotten me."

"There is no forgetting here," came the answer.

"Then why do you not let me through?"

"Your sins expel you."

"My sins! My sins! What sins have I committed? What commandment have I broken?" questioned the girl, with the surprise of self-convinced innocence.

"The sixth commandment. 'Thou shalt do no murder.'"

Hilda shrank back in horror, amazement, anger.

"I commit murder! I, who could never bear to see even a bird shot."

"Yes, you are a murderess," answered the angel, sternly. "You who recoiled from that woman are much more guilty. She, in great temptation, in great provocation, killed but mortal bodies; you, in mere vanity, in mere idleness, have killed immortal souls!

"Thinkest thou there is no margin to a commandment. Know you not that though the text be brief, yet does it overflow beyond the limits of words on to the broad margin of meaning labeling unwritten sins, and you have broken a marginal commandment. 'Thou shalt do no murder.'"

"But I have committed no murder," reiterated the trembling girl.

"Behold and see," and the angel passed his hand over the eyes of the belle of the London season.

* * * * * *

Yes; she knows the young face again. He had been one of her boyish suitors, whom she had flirted with and then laughed at. He is holding a dicebox now in his shaking hand, and on that dicebox is written the word—"Hilda."

Ah! who is that drunken man glaring at her with bloodshot eyes? He lifts a glass of spirits, and on that glass is engraved one word—"Hilda."

Ah! poor, poor wife of a loveless marriage, made by the husband in a moment of pique. Her tears, as they fall form one word—"Hilda."

Yet another face she sees—the face of a last year's flirtation. It is pale with the anguish of death, and on the pistol by his side is stamped one word—"Hilda."

Then the girl falls at the feet of the angel with an exceeding bitter cry.

"I am indeed a murderess."

* * * * * *

Her own bitter cry awakens Hilda, and she starts up trembling in every limb, to find that the lace scarf round her throat had caught in the wicker chair, which perhaps accounted for the choking sensation of her dream.

The next day the belle of the season said "Yes" to Jack Armstrong, and sealed with two loving lips the death warrant of the heartless coquette.

OF MINCE PIE.—The origin of this famous dish, like that of the heroic in all kinds and classes, is involved in fable. By some it has been supposed, from the oriental ingredients which enter into its composition, to have a reference (as probably had also the plum-porridge of those days) to the offerings made by the wise men of the East; and it was anciently the custom to make these pies of an oblong form, thereby representing the manger, in which, on that occasion, those sages found the infant Jesus.

Against this practice (which was of the same character with that of the little image called the Yule Dough or Yule Cake, formerly presented by bakers to their customers, at the anniversary of the Nativity), the Puritans made a vehement outcry as idolatrous.

Of course, it was supported by the Catholics with a zeal, the larger part of which was derived from the opposition of their adversaries; and the latter having pronounced the mincepie to be an abomination, the eating thereof was immediately established as a test of orthodoxy by the former.

One old writer mentions that, even when distressed for a comfortable meal, some would refuse to partake of this very tempting dish when set before them—and mentions John Bunyan, when in confinement, as an example.

WHERE THE DIFFERENCE CAME IN.—A witty and popular New York clergyman had recently a laughable, but at the same time, unpleasant experience. One Sunday, a few weeks back, he was going up the steps of his Fifth Avenue church, when he was asked by an old lady, who did not know him, to help her up the steps.

With his usual courtly grace he complied with her request. On reaching the top step, she halted breathlessly, and asked him who was going to preach that day.

"The Rev. Mr. Blank," he replied, giving his own name.

"Oh, dear," exclaimed the old lady. "Help me down again! I'd rather listen to a man sharpening a saw. Please help me down again. I reckon I won't go in to-day."

The clergyman smiled, and gently assisted her down the steps, remarking, as he reached the last step:—

"I wouldn't go in either if I wern't the preacher."

THE DEAD LONG AGO.

BY M. E.

'Neath the Christmas snows the world was white,
And icicles hung from the eaves,
While the hollyberries glimmered bright
From their green and shining leaves,
When, far away from the circling throng,
In a fait'ring voice and low,
You gave me the answer I sought for long
With a branch of mistletoe.

Oh, often since have the wintry snows
On the hills and the valleys lain,
We have languished and sighed in our joys and woes,
We have known both loss and gain;
But through all the strife and cares of life,
Through the mingled bliss and woe,
I've kept the branch you gave, dear wife,
Of the berried mistletoe.

Oh, the midnight stars in the skies o'erhead,
Less bright than your bright eyes were,
And the hollyberries' crimson red
With your lips could not compare:
But your charms have waned, and my hair is white
As the freshly-fallen snow,
Yet our love is strong as it was that night
In the dear dead long-ago!

The Countess Ilona.

BY A. H.

"YOU a patriot—traitor!"

The Countess Anna Csanyi, flung herself among the sofa cushions and begun to sob hysterically. She considered herself to have been most vilely treated.

Her tall sister went meanwhile to the window and stood gazing in vexed perplexity over wood and meadow, sloping gently down to the frozen river Maros. Far away the peaks of the Carpathians shimmered white and dazzling in the winter sunshine.

It was a fair prospect indeed; snowy and peaceful, and yet it was one over which the cannon had thundered not ten days since.

"What would you advise then?" asked the Countess Ilona, turning at last towards her sister; "tell me."

Now this was in '49, in excited Hungary, when people were apt both to judge and to act rather hastily.

"Give the wretch up to be shot," said Anna tearfully, but decidedly, "or else assuredly we shall be."

"Rubbish!" exclaimed her impulsive sister, quickly. But, all the same, her pale face flushed slightly. Anna was not entirely wrong.

It was hard. Husband and white-headed father were laying down their lives for the tri-color, and she, who would cheerfully have died for her country, must sit at home forsooth, and smooth the pillows of a feverish, hated Imperialist—she, the daughter of the Magyars, with her eyes like sloes, and her figure as straight and slender as a willow sapling!

Never were wounded heroes nursed as the Countess Ilona had nursed those struck in the last week's combat. Never breathed a truer patriot, happy to give up her last sheet and handkerchief to bind her country's wounds. And, when the Austrian was brought here among others, forgotten, half-frozen, a cut on his head and a bullet in his arm, the Countess Ilona had said quietly:—

"Poor man, we must take care of him also." Whereat her sister upstairs in the drawing room had said a great many other things, but without effect.

"Ilona, you are ridiculous!" now she whispered, "to endanger us all for your idiotic fancies. Our good, dear brave Honveds are coming, and very probably they have heard some whisper of this disgraceful spy. They might search the house."

"Let them!" promptly replied her sister, "we are no traitors!"

Her sister slid off the green damask sofa, and lay with her head on the cold, boarded floor.

"You are cruel, Ilona!" she sobbed. "You care nothing for my feelings, nor even for your little girl. You—you prefer a horrid, hateful German!"

In those days all who were not with struggling Hungary were Germans.

"I care nothing!" Ilona looked sadly at her sister, because Anna evidently did not understand. "How can I give up this man?" she asked simply. "A poor, wounded soldier, under my protection. Why, surely that would be the basest treachery!"

"And you are a traitor."

The Countess Ilona's lips quivered, and for some minutes she did not speak. Then she said softly, "Please get up and leave off crying, Anna. It will hardly do for our Honveds to find you like this."

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"You are feeling better, Herr Lieutenant?"

The man on the bed gave an impatient sigh, which subsided into a smile of welcome. He had a most youthful countenance, and straightforward, northern blue eyes, surrounded by a broad linen bandage.

"Longing to rejoin the regiment, Countess," he murmured dolefully, "and relieve you of an unwelcome visitor."

The Countess Ilona refrained from informing him what an unwelcome guest he really was. Once, long ago, she might have done so, but that was before the first suffering enemy had been carried into her castle courtyard.

She stood gazing pityingly at him, her charming pale face framed by its setting of soft, dark hair, and the quaint black cap, which she, as a patriot, always wore. No golden "parta" or coronet bound her head. Her gown, too, was absolutely plain save for its full white chemisette, and gay little rosette of red, white and green, the colors of Hungary.

"I wonder if you would object to a slight change to oblige me," she was saying. "You see everyone else has left our hospital but you."

"And for me, the sooner the better!"

"You are most ungrateful!" The lady laid a restraining hand on his pillow. "It is so cold crossing the courtyard in this weather," she remarked, "I should like to bring you into the house, Herr Lieutenant."

"If the Countess wishes it."

The Countess was, in reality, very undecided on that point, and the untruth made her cheeks burn.

"If you can get up, I should prefer it," she said.

She helped her patient with his tunic, which was white and fine, and altogether different from the coarse brown cloth of Bem's Honveds. She lent him her fur-lined cloak, and would have finished by winding a woolen shawl round the damaged head, completely disguising his appearance.

But at that the soldier flushed crimson, and protested.

"No officer of the Emperor's army could tie up his head in a pink crochet scarf! The thing is impossible!"

"Do as you like, then," said Ilona, "only remember who saved your life."

Evidently this argument was unanswerable, or else he was too weak for resistance; but certainly, five minutes later, Countess Ilona crossed the snowy courtyard, accompanied by Juicsa, the steward's wife.

Everybody knew tall Juicsa, whom the battle of Piski had made a widow. But the one or two maid servants of the desolate little household were at dinner just then, and the dining room windows looked another way.

"I have only a very small room," said the Countess.

The deserted dining-hall was entered from a stone terrace, and through a door at the farther end they walked down a dark passage, coming finally to the store-chamber. Beyond this, in a mere scrap of a room, whitewashed, nearly empty, and smelling strongly of apples, Ilona stopped and looked at her companion.

"Can you exist here?" she asked. It is very uncomfortable, I fear."

There was, indeed, one kitchen chair, an old bedstead, and a bit of barred window high up in the wall.

"Why not?" inquired the soldier. He sank down rather giddily on the chair, but his face expressed considerable bewilderment.

"Countess," he said, gravely, "why do you do this? Do you know who and what I am?"

"A wounded soldier."

"Your enemy. Your county's enemy. An Imperialist who——"

"If you think I want to imprison you," interrupted Ilona, "here is the key. Unfortunately there is no catch to this old door, just the key. Either you or I must keep it."

"I am your prisoner always," replied the young man. His eyes met hers, and he added steadily, "Only your countrymen might think ill of your kindness, Countess. You must promise not to screen me."

"Screen you? I am no lukewarm patriot!" exclaimed the lady, "but until your sword arm is better, you are under my charge, Herr Lieutenant, and I intend to take care of you."

After which reassuring statement she went out, and locked the door behind her. It was whitewashed on that side, and needed, in fact, the best of lights to distinguish it from the wall.

By the time she had succeeded in pushing a clumsy wooden cupboard up against it, Countess Anna suddenly appeared in the room.

"Dear me! How hot and untidy you look!" exclaimed that young lady. She herself was resplendent in rustling blue silk, and bodice gold-laced, embroidered apron and streamers of tri-colored ribbon on her long colorless hair.

When her sister explained that she was selecting some preserves for their expected visitors, the Countess Anna merely smiled scornfully.

"You are such a good patriot, you know, Ilona," she observed.

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"Now our kind hostess will tell us something."

Honved coats, and Honved caps, and an all-pervading scene of red, white and green filled the dining room with an atmosphere of highly exalted patriotism. It shone on the grim, dark features of the elder warriors, and on the rosy boyish faces of the younger men alike. Bem's Honveds were fighting for hearth and home.

Bem, indeed, appeared as a sort of deity to them. Wounded, he had yet beaten the Imperialists at Piski, and was steadily driving them out of Transylvania. The Honved officer in charge had not fought at Piski, yet his version of the war was melodramatic in the extreme.

They were marching to join their beloved general, now at Dobra, and the Countess's hospitality came as a boon indeed to cold and weary patriots, in this bitter winter weather.

"Captain Poklissy," said that lady, "what am I to tell you?" She had met this gentleman before, in other days which she hoped he had forgotten.

"We are out of the world here!" she added, with a faint tinge of color. Only two men in the world had ever found the Countess Ilona perfectly beautiful. One was her husband and the other Lazslo Poklissy.

"I should like," began that last-named officer, "to see a list of your patients. The Countess, we hear, extended her womanly pity even to our unworthy foes."

"Certainly," Ilona answered. "I did nurse some Austrians, but kept no list." She caught a glimpse of her sister across the table just then, she was serving the wine with a face the color of the table-cloth. Anna had called her a traitor that morning.

"General Bem had his finger taken off at Szaszvaros, the Countess knows? I am grieved to say," pursued Poklissy, gazing fixedly at his hostess, "that the scoundrel who did it was recognised here in your hospital not more than three days ago!"

"There is no one in hospital now," said Ilona. Her voice, however, was not quite steady.

"And there is no wine," broke in Anna, at her elbow. "Where is the cellar key, Ilona, dear?"

The Countess was confused, apparently, for she laid the whole jingling bunch of her household keys into her sister's hand without thinking.

"When she comes back you had better search the house," she remarked dryly, "since my word is not sufficient."

"Thanks. After dinner will do."

And Ilona was speechless, as she suddenly recollected Anna's threat of the morning, and that the key of the apple closet was among those she had but just given her.

Meanwhile, Poklissy was studying her carefully.

"It would be a pity to invent a dishonorable lie," he observed at length. "Come, Countess, give up this low German villain. Surely we are not to reckon you a traitor?"

"I—a traitor!" gasped Ilona. The probable consequences of his word flashed upon her, and she started very visibly.

"God knows I am no traitor!" she exclaimed, and she glanced down two rows of hard, pitiless faces as if seeking confirmation. Instead, she all at once encountered a face that was young, and bandaged, and altogether familiar. And then the Countess Ilona understood that her sister had rendered all further denials useless.

It was the Austrian, of course. Poklissy's surprised sneer, Anna's finery, the red-brown coats of the soldiers, faded for one brief instant into a curious blurred pattern. Anna, her own sister, to do this thing! Then the Hungarian captain commenced speaking in his own dramatic fashion.

He thanked the Countess Anna for saving him a most disagreeable duty. No doubt the young man here would thank her himself from rescuing him from cowardice and ignominy.

"I do!" ejaculated the Austrian fervently, "and I thank the Countess for giving me this opportunity to do her a service."

The lad's face was white with physical suffering, nevertheless, and as his brave blue eyes sought hers, Ilona averted her head. Poklissy, taking in the agitated little household with his own keen black ones, judged it wise, perhaps, to speak.

"I greatly regret," he began, "to break up so pleasant a party——"

Then Ilona rose. "This is your prisoner," she said calmly. "Do as you like with him. Only, until now, I—I thought we Hungarians were merciful to the—the wounded and the helpless, Captain Poklissy."

There were tears shining in her eyes as she hastened out of the room.

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Countess Ilona had fled to her boudoir. This was a plain, oblong little room, whitewashed, hung with pink and white peasant embroidery, after the fashion of those days, and adorned with a severe set of furniture in cherry and red damask.

Because her head was burning she pressed it against a wool-work sofa cushion, and waited. Soon a shot must ring out from the courtyard. But five minutes passed, then ten, and still all was silence. Finally there was a man's footstep, and with it came Poklissy.

"Lazslo Poklissy!" exclaimed Ilona. She rose up from the sofa, and stood facing the visitor. He was a fanatic patriot, this leader of men, very strong, and very cruel in mere brute strength.

"If the gracious Countess can spare me a few moments," he announced grimly, "I wish to speak with her."

Ilona let him stand.

"You need not reproach me," she said rapidly. "I am quite ready to take the blame in this matter. I did it, no one else. My sister, and everyone in the house, are perfectly innocent."

"Your sister is above suspicion," answered the soldier; "and as for you, Countess—I do not harm women and children."

He looked at her as he said this, and Ilona's eyes blazed in sudden inexplicable anger.

"In that case, go—" she said hotly, "to your duty."

But the Honved officer disregarded this hint. He stepped closer to the lady, smiling oddly.

"Countess Ilona," he said sternly, "you do not seem aware what a serious mistake you have made . . . to scheme against your country! I am generous above words to overlook such an offence. But one does much for an old friend, and I, alas, am weak enough to go further. It appears you have a fancy for this—German, which is quite extraordinary! Well, Lady Ilona, I will let off your little German on one condition. Such a little reward! Any Hungarian woman might be proud to grant it to a fellow-patriot. Why, I claim it from one friend, from one true patriot to another. Give me a kiss, Ilona!"

"You dare!" cried Ilona. Shame, and horror, and stupefying astonishment nearly left her speechless. "You . . . Captain Poklissy, you dare to insult me in my own house. It was my duty to protect this Austrian, and I protected him. If it is your duty to shoot him, go and shoot him directly."

And, in spite of all this, however, she looked, at that moment, so utterly slight and helpless in her simple black dress, that it is to be wondered the man did not take what he wanted by force.

He did not, however, but stepped backwards to the door, and stood a second, a deep frown wrinkling his forehead.

"This is your final answer?" he asked, "I may give the order?"

But the Countess remained obstinately silent, and so with that he left her.

Ilona then went to the window. She unfastened the inner casement, and leant gazing intently through the outer panes. The afternoon sun had melted some of the hoar-frost, and it was easy to see into the courtyard, and where the temporary hospital—the laundry of happier days—ran to the right.

A man was standing against its blank white wall. White loyoles hung from

the eaves, snow lay at his feet and on the roof above.

In the general whiteness, his coat, white too, shone with a glint of gold. At the other end of the yard some red-brown Honveds were clustered, while Poklissy was midway, on the steps of the stone terrace.

Ilona longed to turn away from the scene, but could not. The prisoner's face haunted her—shut out all other view. It was the boy whose life she had saved once, whom she had promised just a few hours since to protect. It was not her fault, surely. . . . Of a sudden there was a flash of a raised musket at the one end, and with it came the click of an opening window.

Then the Countess Szikiay deliberately put her head out into the golden winter sunshine.

"Poklissy!" she called, "Poklissy, is it too late?"

For answer the figure on the steps wheeled round suddenly, and there was a fresh gleam as the musket fell again. That was all.

On that February evening much bitterness filled the heart of the troubled mistress of an old house on the river Maros. What mad impulse was it that led her to screen her country's foe? And to save this foe, she, the wife of the noblest man on earth, had actually suffered some one else to kiss her, not once in friendship, but passionately, three times.

"Everything is lost save honor," quoted the Countess Anna, whose conscience was of an elastic nature, and who, besides, knew naught of the above incident. But her sister held that honor was lost also.

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It was an autumn afternoon of 1849. The scene was in an old chateau by the yellow Maros, where a military "visitation," as it was called, was in full force. A rigorous police raid this, where the curt Austrian lieutenant, armed with his sword and a bundle of papers, held nothing sacred in the eyes of the Imperial law.

Rebels' locks might be forced, rebels' good rifled, and disposed of at pleasure. Somewhat apart from the noisy confusion, the unfortunate inmates of the house waited in sullen despair. The Countess Ilona Szikiay had felt one transient gleam of hope as she recognized the blue eyes and straight-cut features of the Austrian officer. But his first words dispelled it.

"We are commanded, in the Emperor's name," he had said, "not to leave this house without Count Aladar Szikiay, a traitor and a rebel."

She had therefore handed him the keys, all except one, which she happened to be wearing on a gold chain under her dress. As she did so, the word "gratitude" crossed her mind, and Ilona smiled with unusual sarcasm.

"Haynau to hang her husband! A criminal's death for the man whose crime it was to love land and liberty even better than his life!"

Outside, barren, weedy stubble fields lay under the brilliant sunshine of an October afternoon. This year there had been no harvest of corn—only men. Outside it was very quiet. Inside heavy feet clattered, rough voices clamored. Presently the noise approached, and some half dozen soldiers pushed their way into the room. "Countess," said the lieutenant, speaking rigidly, "you have forgotten to give us one key, I think—the key to the apple closet."

"There are apples in the orchard," attempted the lady, "go and gather them yourselves." But her face was too telltale, and her voice far too anxious for this.

There was a slight pause, and these well disciplined men, led by the Austrian with his well-remembered countenance, turned, marched through the dining-room and the dark resounding passage. They knew the way, because the Countess Ilona had taught it one of them already.

She followed of course. All over distressed Hungary daily this happened in a hundred homes. It had grown to be considered inevitable. Then, in the store-room, which being entirely empty, could no longer claim that title, the Imperial officer, with his golden hair, and icy demeanor, halted abruptly.

"Will you give me the key quietly?" he demanded, "or shall we break the lock?"

The red scar of a deep wound showed very vividly on this young man's forehead just then, and caused the lady standing by the sharpest pang of reproach. This was her reward. After all, he was only truer to his duty than she had been to hers.

For the rest it was all lost now; crowbars could not make it easier. She raised her hand to the chain at her neck and held out the key. The Countess Ilona, the rebel's wife, heard it grate in the lock, and, after that, the rush of the yellow Maros close under the iron-barred window beside her.

Then she saw the Austrian lieutenant emerge, and these are the words that she remembered hearing: "There is nobody in there—only a few apples and nuts."

* * * * * * * *

Many years later, at an Imperial ball in Vienna, Colonel Baron Franz v. Hasenaur sat entertaining his partner the Countess Szikiay (nee Countess Ilona Csanyi), with varied recollections of his many campaigns.

After a while the talk drifted on to the Revolution of '48, with its horrors and heroes.

"And what has become of that implacable patriot, your sister?" queried the soldier.

"Anna? Why she married an Austrian after all—Colonel Steckenfeld!"

"Steckenfeld! A rigorous anti-Magyar! Quite celebrated for his stern measures against our compatriots!"

"And so is Anna," said the lady. And then they both laughed.

"She nearly had me shot once!" reflected the Baron.

"Poklissy's dead, I think?"

"Yes. Shot him at Villagos, when the troops surrendered. Now, why didn't he shoot me first, that afternoon? How did you prevent it, Countess? Tell me; I have always wondered."

"I—He was an old friend of mine," said the Countess, evasively. She blushed despite all the long, long years that had lapsed. But she did not tell him.

Last summer, I believe, standing before the Honved relics at the Pesth Millennial Exhibition, an old white headed soldier asked his companion, a sweet-faced old lady, the same question; and with the same result.

SOME RASH OFFERS.

Everyone likes to have his or her commands instantly obeyed, and literally carried out. Prompt attention to orders given is an exceedingly gratifying form of service.

There are occasions, however, when such immediate and absolute compliance has a result that is not ultimately quite so pleasing. Especially is this the case in those instances where hurried utterances are the result of sudden testiness, and where, as the saying is, we are "taken at our word."

A little recent happening at a provincial police station; for example, well illustrates such contention.

On a charge of stealing wearing apparel, a man was arrested and placed in a corridor for the purpose of preliminary examination.

Ushering in another prisoner, a police man opened the gate and withdrew, leaving it ajar. Promptly prisoner No. 1 sauntered innocently out into the yard, and seeing a reserve constable posted there, he coolly asked him for a drink of water. The officer eyed the man with suspicion.

"You'll get no water here," said he; adding peremptorily, "and you had better take your hook." Needless to say the overjoyed artful one did not linger.

Returning from a visit to the country, a householder approaching his locked-up residence, was surprised to see a shabby-looking man standing in the gateway fastening up a parcel.

"What are you doing here?" he inquired angrily.

"Only a-doing up my bundle," whined the man piteously.

"Well," said the gentleman, giving his captive a push, "just you clear out, or I'll fetch a policeman." He watched him disappear down the road, and then entered, to find to his intense mortification that the premises had been ransacked from top to bottom.

In a certain drapery establishment a young lady had make a trivial mistake which had very much put out a fussy regular customer. The proprietor sent for the culprit, and flying into a rage, "For two pins I'd send you packing as soon as the sale is over," he bellowed. "Next time anything of the sort happens out you go."

Holding up whilst in her employer's office, the young lady, on reaching the corridor, burst into tears. Then she started, as a kindly voice said, "Why, Miss Cashdown, whatever is the matter?" The speaker was a lady, a wealthy country customer of the firm, just up in town. Taken unawares, the girl related what had happened.

A moment later the lady entered the proprietor's office; and, as that individual bowed low, his now indignant visitor said:—

"I've heard what has just happened with Miss Cashdown. There are your two pins," and she threw them on the table. "Miss Cashdown leaves on Saturday. If you object, I close my account with you."

No difficulties were raised. The young lady left, and was received into the family of the wealthy lady.

LAND GIVEN AWAY.—The statistics of the General Land Office show that this country, first and last, has had the prodigious amount of 1,835,017,963 acres of land to dispose of. This area includes everything not in the original thirteen States, as now constituted.

These lands fall into four classes. First are those already disposed of or appropriated. They include 214,414,395 acres sold for cash, 102,280,228 taken up as homesteads, 165,476,402 granted to States, 106,584,893 given to railroads and other roads, canals and river improvement projects, State or corporation, 70,000,000 private grants, 60,232,790 in military bounty warrants, 10,118,228 in timber culture entries, and other smaller classes, aggregating 741,702,365 acres, under this head. For various reasons these estimates are rough, but they are near enough to the true amounts for practical purposes.

Next we have the reserved lands. These include 81,645,413 acres set apart for the Indians, 18,993,280 as forest reservations, 3,272,960 as national parks, 825,425 for forts and other military purposes, with enough miscellaneous to bring the aggregate to 132,441,744.

The third great class comprises the lands of Alaska in which few surveys and disposals have yet been made, the aggregate being 369,529,600. With the advance of civilization Alaska may not remain wholly a class by itself.

Finally, we have the fourth class, or lands now vacant and subject to settlement, amounting to 591,343,953 acres. Of these, however, nearly half, or 272,204,120 acres, have not yet been surveyed. The largest body of vacant public lands is in Montana, 71,432,917 acres, Nevada following, with 61,578,586, and Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming, each having over 40,000,000 acres.

But while these figures of the extent of the public lands available for settlement are so great, practically almost all of the best land, in accessible places, is taken up. The arid tracts not susceptible of irrigation and the mountain and forest regions which cannot now be used for farming constitute the larger portion of the nearly 600,000,000 acres of the now vacant public lands. The old saying that "Uncle Sam is rich enough to give us all a farm" is not heard much nowadays. He is still a big land owner, but has been lavish with his best possessions.

THE GUNS OF THE FUTURE.—We have become familiar with smokeless gunpowder, in idea at least, and we are aware that it makes not nearly so much noise as the old-fashioned sort. But silent cannon, which emit only a flash, are still a novelty—not a welcome one either to soldiers. Colonel Humbert of the French army has invented this boon and patented it. The experiments carried out by the Hotchkiss company are said to be most promising. In some wonderful manner he contrives that the mouth of the gun shall shut automatically the instant its missile has emerged. Thus the flame and the report are bottled up. This also would make for the extinction of war. It is remarked that the latest improvements tend to assist a defending force rather than the assailants.

Repeating rifles and smokeless powder, machine guns and balloons strengthen those who have to repel an attack, while they are under cover. But if the art of war be intuitive, what exceptional men the great generals of the future must be. Without smoke or flash, or even sound, to indicate the position of a battery which decimates his troops at a distance to be reckoned in miles, an ordinary mortal would be distracted. Doubtless, if this invention prove to answer, it will be applied to small arms also. The French are agitating now for the abolition of universal compulsory service, upon the ground that Germany will never attack them. In a few years, apparently, no nation will dare to invade another.

Independently of the beautiful suggestion to remembrance which is made by its enduring perfume, that precious perfume itself would recommend this herb, for reasons less fine, as 'strewings fitt'st for graves."

The fact of its being in bloom at this season would naturally introduce the rosemary, with all its fine morals, into the Christmas celebrations; and such customs as that which prescribe that the wassail-bowl should be stirred with a sprig of this plant before it went round amongst friends, seem to have a very elegant reference to its secret virtues. But the mistetoe, of which all know, ever has been, and probably always will be, the one most intimately associated with this great time of the year.

Bric-a-Brac.

THE BARREL ORGAN.—The fact may not be generally known that we owe the barrel organ primarily to the church. Towards the end of the last century barrel organs were very largely used in the different churches. In those days organists were few, and large barrel organs, set to hymn tunes and psalm chants and sacred melodies, were far cheaper and a great deal more trustworthy.

CANDIDATES FOR MARRIAGE.—In South Africa some of the savage tribes have a peculiar ceremony through which they put the matrimonial candidate, previously to his entering the holy state, for the purpose of testing his fitness for it. His hands are tied up for two hours in a bag containing fire ants. If he bears unmoved the torture of their stings, he is considered qualified to cope with the nagging and daily jar and fret of married life.

GOING A GOODING.—The actual observance of Christmas begins in parts of England on the 21st of December, St. Thomas' Day. Many queer customs there prevail, among which may be mentioned the practice of "going a gooding," which exists in some parts of Kent, and is performed by women, who present sprigs of evergreen and Christmas flowers, and beg for money in return. We believe the term "going a gooding," scarcely requires illustration. It means, simply, going about to wish "good even," or simply "good evening."

WASTE.—In Paris nothing is wasted—not the smallest scrap of paper; that which every one else throws away here becomes a source of profit. Old provision tins, for instance, are full of money—the lead soldering is removed and melted down into cakes, while the tin goes to make children's toys. Old boots, however bad, always contain in the arch of the foot at least one sound piece that will serve again, and generally there are two or three others in the sole, the heel, and at the back. Scraps of paper go to the cardboard factory, orange-peel to the marmalade-maker, and so on. The most valuable refuse, that which fetches two francs the kilo, is hair; the long goes to the hairdresser, while the short is used, among other things, for clarifying oils.

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THE SATURDAY EVENING POST
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ISSUED WEEKLY AT 425 ARCH ST.

PHILADELPHIA, DEC. 25, 1897.

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SEASONS AND FESTIVALS.

Of the crowded memorials reared by others along the stream of time, many are written in a cypher, of which the key is lost. The wrappings of the mummy are letters of a dead language; and no man can translate the ancient story of the pyramid!

We have learnt to speak of time, because it is that portion of eternity with which we have presently to do,—as if it were a whit more intelligible—less vague, abstract, and unimaginable—than that eternity of which it is a part. He who can conceive of the one, must be able to embrace the image of the other.

Time, abstractedly considered, as what, in truth, it is—a portion of the vast ocean of eternity—a river flowing from the sea, and flowing to the sea—a channel leading from deep to deep, through shores on which the races of the world are permitted to build for awhile, until the great waters shall once more cover all, and time, as time, "shall be no more,"—must long have defied the skill of man to map out its surface, and write his memorials upon its impalpable bosom.

But the solution of the problem was suggested to him, as the materials for working it are still furnished, by the finger of God, himself. The great architect of the universe hath planted in its frame all necessary models and materials for the guidance and use of its human inhabitants.

The hand that fashioned the "two great lights," and appointed to them their courses, and gave them, to be "for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years," pointed out to man how he might, by the observation of their revolutions, direct his course along the unbroken stream of time, or count its waves as they flowed silently and ceaselessly away.

To the great natural divisions of time the ingenuity of man, under the direction of his wants has been busy, since the world began, in adding artificial ones; while his heart has been active in supplying impulses, and furnishing devices, to that end. Years, and months, and days,—the periods marked out by the revolutions of our celestial guides,—have been aggregated and divided, after methods almost as various as the nations of the earth.

But out of these conventional and multiplied divisions of time,—these wheels within the great wheel,—arise results far more important than the verification of chronological series, or the establishment of the harmonies of history. Through them, not only may the ages of the world be said to intercommunicate, and the ends of the earth, in a sense, to meet, but, by their aid, the whole business of the life of nations, and of individuals is regulated, and a set of mnemonics established upon which hinges the history of the human heart.

Thus it is with Christmas. By the multiplied but regular system of recurrences thus obtained, order is made to arise out of the web of duties and the chaos of events;—and at each of the thousand points marked out on these concentric circles, the present season in particular, are written their appropriate duties, and recorded their special memories.

The calendar of every country is thus covered over with a series of events, all Christian nations joining in this one, whose recollection is recalled, and influence kept alive, by the return of the cycles, in their ceaseless revolution, to those spots at which the record of each has been written;—and acts of sentiment or of festival, of social obligation or of moral observance,—many of which would be surely lost or overlooked, amidst the inextricable confusion in which, without this systematic arrangement, they must be mingled,—are severally pointed out by the moving finger of Time, as he periodically reaches the place of each, on his concentric dials.

But, besides the calendar of general direction and national observance of Christmas, where is the heart at this time that has not a private calendar of its own! Long ere the meridian of life has been attained, the individual man has made many a memorandum, of joy or pain, for his periodical perusal,—and established many a private celebration, pleasant or mournful, of his own.

How many a lost hope and blighted feeling, which the heart is the better for recalling, and would not willingly forget, would pass from the mind, amid the crowd, and noise, and bustle of the world, but for these tablets, on which it is ineffaceably written, and yearly read! How many an act of memory, with its store of consolations and its treasure of warnings, would remain postponed, amid the interests of the present, till it came to be forgotten altogether; but for that system which has marked its positive place upon the wheels of time, and brings the record certainly before the mental eye, in their unvarying revolution!

Many are the uses of these diaries of the heart and most of all of Christmas. By their aid, something is saved from the wrecks of the past for the service of the present;—the lights of former days are made to throw pleasant reflections upon many an after period of life;—the weeds which the world and its cares had fostered, are, again and again, cleared away from the sweet and wholesome fountain of tears;—the fading inscriptions of other years are renewed, to yield their morals to the future;—and the dead are restored, for a fleeting hour of sweet communion, or hold high and solemn converse with us, from the graves in which we laid them years ago.

For these reasons,—and some others which are more personal and less philosophical,—we love this, and in a degree all these anniversaries, for their own sakes, and for their uses. We love those Lethes of an hour, which have a virtue beyond their gift of oblivion; and, while they furnish a temporary forgetfulness of many of the ills of life, revive the memory of many a past enjoyment, and reawaken many a slumbering affection. We love those mile-stones on the journey of life, beside which man is called upon to pause, and take a reckoning of the distance he has passed, and of that which he may have yet to go. We love to reach those free open spaces at which the cross-roads of the world converge; and where are kept alive, by periodical reawakenings, the flame of charity which, thus, has scarcely time wholly to expire, during all the year.

We love all which tends to call man from the solitary and chilling pursuit of his own separate and selfish views, into the warmth of a common sympathy, and within the bands of a common brotherhood. We love these commemorations, as we have said, for themselves—we love them for their uses—and still more we love them for the memories of our boyhood!

Many a bright picture do they call up in our minds,—and in the minds of most who have been amongst their observers; for with these festivals of the heart are inalienably connected many a memory, for sorrow or for joy—many a scene of early love—many a merry meeting which was yet the last—many a parting of those who shall part no more—many a joyous group, composed of materials which separated only too soon, and shall never be put together again on earth—many a long treasure and many a perished hope.

And though, many and many a time, the smile has faltered on our lips, as we "turned from all they brought to all they could not bring," still, we enjoy them, as yet we may,—drawing closer to us, and with the more reason, the friends that still remain, and draining, to the last, "One draught of delightful memories for a joyous banquet past."

Is looking back at these Christmas times as so many are wont to do you never feel that upon any occasion you have acted too generously; but you often regret that you did not give enough, or that you did not give at all. The moral seems to be, always give the higher sum or do the most when in doubt. It seems to me that parents, and others having the charge of children, might do more than is done to teach them the only means of making life worth living, and to point out to them the rocks and eddies from which they themselves have suffered in life's passage.

DUTY cannot be confined to certain times or certain places and shut out from others. It is as present in our business or in our homes, as potent in our lightest amusements as in our gravest endeavors. Let us not cramp its power or limit its range, still less exclude it from an intellectual region, but rather strive to trace it through all that comes to us, and search for its lessons in everything we learn. The light of new truth will ever reveal to the faithful seeker the responsibilities and duties with which he is charged.

A BABE is a mother's anchor. She cannot swing far from her mooring. And yet a true mother never lives so little in the present as when by the side of the cradle. Her thoughts follow the imagined future of her child. That babe is the boldest of pilots, and guides her fearless thoughts down through scenes of coming years. The old ark never made such a voyage as the cradle daily makes.

IT is utterly impossible that two ordinary persons should live contentedly together, and not offend each other sometimes. The offence may not be intentional; it may occur inadvertently. In order to enjoy life, all unintentional offences ought to be forgiven.

Each one who unites with others in any undertaking should hold himself strictly accountable for his own share in it. Whatever others do or do not do cannot absolve him from the duty he has undertaken; nor can he transfer it to any other shoulders.

Love can hope where reason would despair.

Correspondence.

J. B.—Place the articles in pure nitric acid this dissolves the copper of the alloy, and leaves the pure gold, or "coloring," upon the surface. The solution used for silver electroplating is cyanide of silver.

E M.—"Annuals" were richly bound volumes, published annually, containing poetry, tales, and essays, by eminent authors, and illustrated by engravings. The first appeared in London in 1823. There were imitations of similar books in Germany.

H. H.—The seven Bibles of the World are the Koran of the Mohammedans, the Tri Petikes of the Buddhists, the Five Kings of the Chinese, the Three Vedas of the Hindoos, the Eddas of the Scandinavians, the Zendevesta (or Zend Avesta) of the Persians, and the Scriptures of the Christians.

E. M.—In the eye of the law the Indian originally held an anomalous position, neither citizen nor alien, and incapable of becoming a citizen; but the disabilities have been removed, and Indians are now enabled to leave their tribes or renounce the tribal system as a body, and become citizens.

D. D. C.—A good varnish for maps and pictures is made of Canada balsam and rectified oil of turpentine in equal parts, mixed. Set the bottle containing the mixture in warm water and agitate until the solution is perfect. Then set in a warm place to settle, and when settled pour off the clear varnish for use.

S. H. R.—It is more difficult to acquire the rudiments of Hebrew than those of Latin or Greek, but it would be possible to attain to a knowledge of Hebrew, which would entitle its possessor to a respectable place among scholars, in less time than would be needed to secure a similar knowledge of Greek or Latin. The reason of this is that the range of Hebrew literature is comparatively small.

E. D. A.—The great fire in Chicago, occurred in October, 1871. There had been several unusually large fires on previous days, but on Sunday evening, October 8, the great fire originated from the upsetting, as is supposed of a lighted kerosene lamp. The fire continued all day Monday, and the progress of the flames was not checked until Tuesday morning. The value of the property destroyed was not less than $90,000,000.

B. LAZES.—It is impossible to answer your questions without knowing more of the circumstances than can be gathered from your letter. As a rule, one should be very careful not to appear to ask for invitations, but if for any reason you should wish to do so, it is better to ask boldly for what you want rather than to do or say anything which would look like "fishing for an invitation." In this case if you can give the lady an opportunity of withdrawing the invitation you should do so.

T. S. A.—To make French polish for boots and shoes, take of logwood chips half a pound; glue, a quarter of a pound; indigo pounded very fine; a quarter of an ounce; soft soap, a quarter of an ounce; isinglass, a quarter of an ounce. Boil these ingredients in two pints of vinegar and one of water for fifteen minutes. Then strain the liquid. When cold it is fit for use. To apply it effectively the dirt must be brushed from the boots or shoes, and the polish put on with a bit of sponge.

L. S. P.—The term Quaker was first applied to members of the Society of Friends in derision. George Fox once bade a persecuting magistrate to "tremble at the name of the Lord," whereupon the official jeeringly called him a Quaker. The epithet thus fastened upon Fox has adhered to his followers to this day. A Quaker once was summoned to the presence of King Charles II., and the king, observing that the Quaker kept his hat on, removed his own. The Quaker asked, "Why does your Majesty remove your hat?" The king humorously replied, "It is customary for only one person at a time to wear a hat in this place."

GEORGIUS.—The lyre-bird is so named from the form of its tail. There are three kinds of feathers in the tail, which are long, and sixteen in number. Twelve have long, slender shafts, with delicate filaments more and more distant towards the end; the middle two feathers, longer than the rest, are pointed at the ends, and barbed only on the inner edge; the external two feathers are broad, growing wider to the ends, and curving outward like an elongated S, the two resembling much the outline of the ancient lyre. These singular birds (natives of Australia) live in pairs in rocky places overgrown with bushes. Their motions are graceful, the males displaying the tail feathers like a peacock.

CHESTER.—The insurrection of the Jacquerie is the name given to the war of the French peasantry, which broke out in 1358. The immediate occasion of it was the enormities perpetrated by Charles the Bad, King of Navarre, and his adherents; but it was really caused by long-continued oppression on the part of the nobles. Suddenly rising against their lords, the peasants laid hundreds of castles in ruins, murdered the nobles and practiced every enormity—acting, as they said, on the principle of doing as had been done to them. For some weeks they were successful, but at last the magnitude of the danger induced the nobles to make common cause against them; and on June 9, 1358, the peasants were defeated with great slaughter, near Meaux, by Captal de Buch and Count of Foix, which put an end to the insurrection.

THE TWO STREAMS.

BY O. W. H.

Behold the rocky wall
That down its sloping sides [fall,
Pours the swift rain-drops, bending as they
In rushing river tides.

Yon stream, whose sources run
Turned by a pebble's edge,
Is Athabasca, rolling toward the sun
Through the cleft mountain-ledge.

The slender rill had strayed,
But for the slanting stone,
To evening's ocean with the tangled braid
Of foam-flecked Oregon.

So from the heights of Will
Life's parting stream descends,
And, as a moment turns its slender rill,
Each widening torrent bends,—

From the same cradle's side,
From the same mother's knee,—
One to long darkness and the frozen tide,
One to the Peaceful Sea.

Leaving the Rest.

BY F. H.

A CITY winter was at its worst when Miles Wayland, yielding reluctantly to his doctor's advice, left counting-house and ledger behind him, and went to Sunhaven for a few weeks' rest.

Sunhaven was not more that a mile or two from one of the most popular and populous places on the South-eastern line, but that mile or two made all the difference between the restless traffic of a busy town and the repose, not to say dulness, of a quiet suburb.

Mr. Wayland went down with the conviction that a few days of it would be as much as he could endure, but he had not been there many hours before he began to change his mind.

His physician, Dr. Whately, had given him a letter of introduction to Mrs. Osborne, the widow of a medical man, and Mr. Wayland was pleasantly relieved to find that Mrs. Osborne had nothing in common with the lodging-house keeper experience had made him painfully familiar with. She added to a very slender income by receiving such visitors as were recommended to her privately, and could afford to pay for the luxury and comfort of a well-appointed house.

She placed a drawing-room floor at his disposal, listened to his instructions and arranged terms with a business-like brevity which gave her a high place in his estimation; and he liked her the more because, from the moment the necessary details were settled, she took her position as the lady of the house, a graceful and attentive hostess, who made the social atmosphere home-like and tranquil.

There were other inmates, but Mr. Wayland rarely saw them and was not disturbed by them. The winter was so far advanced that the majority of Mrs. Osborne's regular guests were gone away for Christmas.

A retired major, with an invalid wife, had the dining-rooms, and Mrs. Middleton, a young widow, with one little girl, occupied an apartment on the second floor. Except for these and Mr. Wayland, Mrs. Osborne's establishment was empty.

It was a very quiet house, so quiet that Wayland was sometimes glad to hear a piano softly played as an accompaniment to one of the sweet old-fashioned songs that have taken an abiding place in the hearts of the people.

Those simple well-worn melodies came with a familiar sound to the city merchant's ear, and brought back memories that moved him more than he would have cared to say, yet he liked to hear them.

In his own mind, and without knowing why, he associated the songs and the music with the young widow, who had occasionally passed him on the landing. He was a reserved but not an ill-bred man, and he never failed to stand aside with a courteous good-morning or good-evening, and when she responded he knew that she had the rare charm of a low and gentle voice, and there was a thoughtful beauty in her face that interested him. She had a pretty name, too. He had heard Mrs. Osborne speak to her as Ruth.

"I wonder what her story is?" he said to himself. "I fancy she is very poor. I see her go out two or three times a day with a music-satchel, no matter what the weather is, rain or sleet, fog, frost, or snow; and she has to keep that child of hers—a shy, dark-eyed little thing, who vanishes like a phantom if she catches sight of me on the stairs.

"I notice, too, that the piano stops, and the singing ceases as soon as they find out I am home. I daresay to them I am a surly old brute, and they study my whims and crotchets for the sake of what I pay."

It pained him to think this for he was not a misanthrope, and the lines in his face were the work of stern suffering and not of age.

This was a subject on which he was not particularly sensitive, though he never mentioned it, and he was grimly amused to find that Mrs. Osborne, in common with the rest of the world, mistook him for an elderly man.

"We shall be losing the major soon," Mrs. Osborne told him one afternoon, when she brought his lamp and lingered as usual for a few minutes' conversation.

"His wife gets no better and he is going to take her to Mentone if she is strong enough for the journey. He is afraid her cough may have disturbed you. He is very considerate, and often says he is afraid they are a nuisance to the old gentleman upstairs. I told him I did not think there were many years between you and him."

"How old is the Major?"

"Fifty-one."

"Then you were wrong, my dear madam. There are many years between us. Twelve, at least."

"You do surprise me Mr. Wayland. I should not have taken you for more than two or three and fifty."

"And I am not yet forty," he said quietly. "But I am an old man, Mrs. Osborne, old in the one thing that makes old age, and leaves time out of the reckoning. Old in heart and tired in spirit, so tired that I only live to wonder why I live."

"I am sorry to hear you say so, Mr. Wayland, for you are a good man, and though you make no display of what you do, there are many who speak and think of you with reverence and gratitude. You are out of health and have seen trouble, perhaps, but you will soon be better, and you are young enough to begin life again."

He shook his head.

"I have lived my day, Mrs Osborne, and am paying the penalty of one mistake made some years ago. I make no new friends, and strangers shun me instinctively. I wish it were not so, for I am lonely at times, and I am fond of children. I am fond of music, too, and that leads me to mention that I hear some one singing and playing now and then, but the music stops if I am heard to move in my room."

"Dr. Whately told me that pianos and children were your bet aversions."

"Troublesome and noisy children, yes; and the ordinary piano jangled in the ordinary way. But this child seems a docile thing, and her mother has music in every touch. Is she a relation of yours?"

"No relation. Her mother was my friend. She is a teacher of music."

"A wearying, unprofitable life. Is it long since she lost her husband?"

"He died before the child was born, and little Mavis is nearly ten."

"Mavis! Did you say Mavis, Mrs. Osborne?"

"Yes, Mr. Wayland. It is an uncommon name, and I think, a very pretty one. We generally call her May."

"Mavis," he said, "and nearly ten. Some one who bore that name was very dear to me. It is, as you say, an uncommon name, and very pretty. Will you kindly tell Mrs. Middleton that her music does not disturb or annoy me in any way? On the contrary, I like to hear it."

"I will tell her so with pleasure."

"Thanks. This teaching of music is a poor living at best, is it not?"

"Some do very well; foreign gentlemen, who call themselves professors, and charge ever so much a lesson; but women, native women, are poorly paid as a rule. Ruth is really a lady, refined and accomplished, and might do better; but she will not be parted from Mavis."

"In what way could she do better?"

"As a traveling companion to a lady, or she could take sole charge of a gentleman's house."

"And would the child be an objection?"

"As a rule, yes."

"And yet there are many, I should think, who would be glad of both. I can speak of one at least, a lonely man—myself, with a lonely man's longing for the love of a child. My own housekeeper, who was my father's, and is very old, would have been pensioned some time ago if I could have found one to take her place. You may mention this to Mrs. Middleton, if you like."

"I will do so with pleasure," Mrs. Osborne said for the second time. "But would it not be as well for you to become better acquainted first? Dine with her at my table; I use the housekeeper's room, but I know you will not object to that."

"Dine with her at my table, please. Not that I object to the housekeeper's room, but I prefer my own, and I will send in something for dessert. Do you think Mrs. Middleton will let little Mavis come with me?"

"I will see."

Mr. Wayland put on his heavy overcoat and boots and waited for Mrs. Middleton's decision. It came in the person of the child, who entered, clinging to Mrs. Osborne's hand. She was shy, but not afraid of "the old gentleman upstairs," whose face, younger by many years for the memories her name had evoked, was full of tenderness.

"I need not ask you to take care of her," Mrs. Osborne said; "I am sure you will. And you are exceptionally favored, Mr. Wayland. It is the first time her mother has ever trusted her with a stranger."

"Then I have the more to thank her for," Wayland said; "and it will not be my fault if we are strangers long."

He had drawn the child to his side as he sat, and was gazing intently at her. He was a man from whom some children shrank, but Mavis seemed to like him, and did not turn her head away when he kissed her silently and with a sigh.

"Mrs. Middleton is very dark," he said.

"Not so dark as Mavis. They are not much alike, either; she is more like her father, I should say."

"That may be it," he assented. "And unless her name has suggested it to my imagination, she resembles the other Mavis that I once knew. But that, of course is the purest fancy."

He asked himself how it could be otherwise. Except for such a wild improbability that he would have questioned the sanity of anyone who had hinted it to him, there could be nothing in common between the Mavis he had lost and Mrs. Middleton's dark-eyed little girl.

The day was clear and cold, and Mr. Wayland enjoyed the walk from Sunhaven to the larger town beyond. He soon discovered that he had a most observant and intelligent companion, for once set going, Mavis had plenty to say.

He acquired a great deal of information from her innocent prattle. He could tell that Ruth Middleton's life was one of sacrifice and struggle, and he made a mental promise that her lot should be brighter if she cared to accept the home he had offered her.

He was not insensible to the gain that would come to him. He had wealth enough and to spare; his business went on and money came in, whether he was there or not, and he had inherited a fine old house, magnificently furnished, near Russell Square.

But his house had never been a home, it was simply a splendid loneliness, wanting the presence of a woman who would be something more than a faithful servant, wanting, more than all, the light footsteps, and the happy laughter of a petted child.

"I want you to tell me just the things you would like, and show me where to get them," he said to Mavis; "and as we are going back in a carriage, we can take some of them with us."

He already knew the names of several articles that mother had promised she should have when the ship came home. Mavis had often watched the stately vessels that came in and those that stood far out at sea, but not one had as yet been the one Ruth Middleton was waiting for; perhaps, although Mavis did not know it, that golden argosy, richly freighted from the fairy storehouse of a woman's hopes and dreams, had never been so near to land as it was now.

Mr. Wayland's first visits were to the fruiterer's and florist's, where he left standing orders for present and future supplies; for the rest of the expedition he surrendered himself entirely to Miss Middleton's guidance, with the result that the fly he engaged, an open landau, disproportionately large for the horse, was piled high with packages, that included a doll as big as a baby, a doll's house as long as a library table, a basket of toys for the Christmas tree; a cargo of bon bons and a milliner's box, which contained a much longed-for velvet jacket trimmed with costly fur. Ruth thanked him for the doll's house and the toys; they were such presents as a rich and eccentric man might purchase for a child he had taken a fancy to, but she shook her head thoughtfully over the other things, but she could not wound the kindly spirit of the giver, nor throw a chill upon her child's delight by refusing to accept them.

"But if you take her out again," she said, "you must promise me, Mr. Wayland, not to indulge in such extravagances."

"The cheapest investment I ever made, my dear madam. I send away five hundred pounds a year to various institutions, and never know what becomes of the money; here I can see and share the pleasure I have given to your little girl."

"You are very kind, sir, but it must not occur again."

"We shall see," he said. "Has Mrs. Osborne mentioned my proposition to you?"

"Yes, Mr. Wayland, but we know so little of each other."

"And you are not quite sure of my motive. You are proud, too, and would not care to accept a favor. Now I want you to understand that in taking charge of my house you would do nothing of the kind.

"Our own housekeeper, Mrs. Warren, is seventy, and practically past her duties. I have for some time been on the lookout for some one to take her place. You, I believe, have been thinking of a similar thing, but little Mavis has been in the way.

"She would not be in my way, Mrs. Middleton. I am lonely and childless, and I have taken a strange fancy to her. I should like to adopt her as my own. Not to take her from you, but to provide for her. You need not give me your answer yet.

"I shall remain here for some weeks, though I am much better; and there is one thing I may mention. Mrs. Warren will retire from her duties, but she will not leave the house. I tell you that as a sop to Mrs. Grundy, though I am old enough, I should say, to satisfy the proprieties."

"You are not an old man, Mr. Wayland."

"You know my age? Mrs. Osborne has told you?"

"She will tell you that I was not surprised when she told me. I did not think you were more than forty. Not that I should consider your age if I were to accept your position, but it is better for Mrs. Warren to remain. It has been her home for so many years."

"This means that you will come?"

"I cannot tell you yet. You must give me time."

They dined at his table, and he spent the most pleasant evening he had known for years. The ice once broken, he gave up his habit of taking his meals alone, and little Mavis was his constant companion when Ruth went out to give her lessons, and he took her with him everywhere.

The town beyond Sunhaven had a theatre, a concert-hall and an aquarium of its own, to say nothing of several arcades and permanent bazaars, and a mile or so of dazzling slopes that reminded him of Regent Street and Piccadilly.

Ruth Middleton was proud, and loved her little daughter dearly, but for some reason of her own she made no further protest when Mr. Wayland spent his money on Mavis with such lavish generosity. Nothing had been said definitely, but it was tacitly understood that when he went to London mother and child would go with him.

Dr. Whately came down for a day, and approved of the arrangement heartily. His patient was a changed man, stronger and happier.

"It is just what you wanted," Whately said, "a new interest in life. Your malady was beyond the reach of medicine; you had nothing to live for. You have improved wonderfully, but you must still be careful; you are not yet out of the wood.

Mr. Wayland smiled incredulously in spite of his respect for his friend's professional opinion.

"I have never felt better," he said; "never felt so well."

"And all because you took a fancy to this pretty child. If you are so fond of children, why did you not adopt one years ago?"

"I never thought of it or cared for one till I met little Mavis here. Her name attracted me at first, and then I saw, or imagined her resemblance to someone else."

"To whom?"

"It is an old story, doctor; one that I never tell."

And yet he did tell that story, but not

to Dr. Whately. He told it to Ruth Middleton one night late in the winter, when he was recovering from a relapse brought on by a chill which he had taken at the theatre.

He was never in absolute danger, but he was very weak, and it might have fared badly with him but for Ruth's skilful nursing and gentle care—such care as he could not expect when he was restored to health.

They would go back to the old footing then, and that was what he could not bear. He wanted the same sweet and sympathetic companionship for the rest of his days.

"You will come with me, Ruth," he said. He had learned to call her Ruth when they were nurse and patient, and it came naturally to him now—"you will come with me, but not as my housekeeper. I want you to be my wife. I love you for your own sake, and I should like to have more than an adoptive father's right to little Mavis. I did not think that I should ever speak of love again to any woman, but you have made yourself very dear to me. Will you be my wife, Ruth, or would it be too great a sacrifice?"

"It would be no sacrifice, Mr. Wayland, if you could be content with such love as I have to give. But you would not care to think that, if I accepted your offer, it would be for the sake of my child. I could not part with her, and I should not like to take her from you."

"For her sake, as mine," he said; "and I hope, soon, for your own. I only want you to be my wife."

"I have something to tell you first," she said, "and then if you ask me again I will say 'yes.'"

"Something to tell me?" he repeated. "Nothing that can come between us, I am sure. And I have something to tell you—a confession to make. It will explain why your little one's name took such a hold upon me. Mavis was the name of my dead wife."

"Your wife, Mr. Wayland?"

"Yes, my wife. I married eleven years ago. Married a girl whom I loved passionately, and yet I broke her heart and lost her. I was not a rich man then, Ruth; I simply had a desk in my father's counting-house, and he was as exacting and rigorous with me as with any other of the men he employed.

"My income was not a large one, but it was sufficient, and I left the management of it to my wife entirely. The Waylands are a thrifty race, and anything like debt was my especial horror; judge then of my consternation and surprise when one of the tradesmen who supplied my house called at the office for payment of an account that had been running more than three months. I had been giving my wife her money every month.

"I paid the man, and learned from him that other tradesmen were in the same position. I asked my wife for an explanation, and she had none to give me, except that she had lent the money to a friend and was expecting to be repaid at any moment.

"She would not give me the friend's name, but I made inquiries and found that some of the bank notes had been changed by an old sweetheart of hers, a worthless fellow, whom no honest man would have had beyond his threshold.

"Had she told me the truth, I would have forgiven her; I learned afterwards that she never saw him, but the money was borrowed for him by his sister. I did not know this when I told my wife the discovery I had made. I left her in bitter anger, and she was in tears; when I went home she was gone.

"My natural inference was that she had gone with him, and I shut my heart as sternly as I closed my door against her.

"My father sent me abroad to manage a foreign branch of his business, and I was away two years, when I returned, my wife was dead, and I heard the truth from the sister of the man she had helped in her mistaken passion. I was not to blame, perhaps, but I have repented and suffered bitterly ever since. It made me old and gray before my time, for I loved her."

"I am sure you did, and I always told her so," Ruth Middleton said, quietly. "The pity is that you were satisfied with your natural inference, and made no inquiries. Mavis was my old friend and schoolfellow, and when she left your house she came to me. She was with me when her child was born, and when she died."

"When her child was born?"

"Her child and yours—our little Mavis here. I am not a widow. I was never married, but I had a woman's heart for a baby's love, and so I kept her, and worked for her, and I never meant to give her up."

He was silent for a long time, holding her hands fast; and she could feel the tears that fell upon them.

"Ruth," he said, at last, "dear Ruth, need we tell her the truth in all its sadness?"

"I think not, Miles. I have been her mother ever since she was born, and should be jealous even of a memory, and you will be her father when I am your wife."

And little Mavis never knew. The name of Middleton became in time a childish recollection, and she had nothing less than a daughter's love for Miles Wayland.

"You want to know whether it was a friendly conspiracy?" Dr. Whately said, when Wayland put the question to him in Russell Square.

"Well, I am not prepared to admit that it went quite so far. I knew the truth; so did Mrs. Osborne. I saw that you were simply wasting away, dying because you had nothing to live for. I sent you there because it would have been a good place for you in any case. We left the rest to Providence."

Trick for Trick.

BY M. A. H.

A LITTLE thud against the window, a soft fluttering and beating as of some living creature urgent for admittance.

With an exclamation of joy, a girl who sat within rose and ran to the lattice where the fading December twilight came filtering through the thick, small panes of glass.

Quickly she unfastened the hasp with quivering fingers, which stumbled a little in their eagerness, and then, as she opened the casement, a bird fluttered in and nestled against her shoulder.

"Sweet little one, my pet, my dove," she murmured, fondling the pretty creature which craned its sheening neck to her caressing hand, "what brings you to me?"

She searched for the string, and there, under the strong yet tender wing, was the little billet she so much desired. With a last caress she put the pigeon on a perch where a little corn and water were ready prepared, and then, kneeling by the fire burning on the hearth, for the daylight was almost gone, she read the missive.

But as she did so her cheek flushed and then paled, and she dropped her hands by her side with a little cry while her breath came quickly.

Then she re-read the tiny letter, but now there was no doubt in her face. She held the paper to the fire as if expecting further characters to appear; but when nothing responded to the test, a flash of anger came into her eyes.

"It is a trick," she murmured, "a trick to get into the town. Oh, I guess who has done this, but I will meet him on his own ground!"

She sprang to her feet, and fetching a mantle and hood wrapped it round her, and ran down the street. It was nearly dark now, and a gray mist hung like a pall over the little city.

The narrow street was almost deserted, save for one or two prowling figures seeking in the gutter for some chance morsel of food, for the siege had lasted some months now and rations were growing very short.

The little dark shops were closed, for no business was doing, and people kept indoors for warmth's sake. The air was raw and keen; now and then the heavy boom of a cannon came from the beleaguering lines drawn close round the little Flemish city which had dared to oppose itself to the Majesty of Spain.

The girl hurried along till she reached one of the most imposing houses on the oblong Palace, which occupied the centre of the town. It was built of brick with high stepped roof and much ornament. Here she mounted to the door and asked to see the Burgomaster.

"What is your business, mistress?" said the servant superciliously; "his worship is much engaged. I suppose you have come but to ask for larger rations, but 'tis no use, there are none to have!"

The girl looked at him haughtily.

"Do your business, sir," she said coldly. "Go tell the Burgomaster that Jacqueline Grootehuis would speak with him on important business!"

The man hesitated; he looked half insolently at her, but something in her manner quelled him. He went away, and after an absence of a few minutes returned, saying sulkily that the Burgomaster would see her.

She followed the lackey into a long, low room, the walls hung with gilded Cordovan leather, and here and there the portrait of some resolute-looking old citizen. The Burgomaster, a tall thin old man, wrapped in a fur-lined robe, sat at a table covered with papers.

He glanced up as the girl entered, and signed her to sit down while he finished the writing he was engaged upon. Then when he had concluded, he regarded her with his keen gray eyes, deep sunk under heavy eyebrows.

"Well, maiden," he said, "you have a matter you would speak of?"

In reply the girl handed him the tiny missive she had taken from beneath the pigeon's wing. He drew a lighted candle nearer to him and read it aloud.

"I weary to see you," it ran, "and there is a chance. One whom I know will get me through the Spanish lines, and if you will be on the bastion to the right of the Gate of St. Andreas, where the guard is badly kept, and bring a rope with you, I can scale the wall. Send back the bird with time and exact place so that there may be no mistake.

Ever your loving heart, QUENTIN."

"Who is this 'Quentin'?" inquired the Burgomaster, after a pause.

"He is my lover; he will be my husband if we live through these dark times. He is the son of Master Alost, of the Guild of Weavers at Ghent, he who died last March."

"And you—are you not the daughter of the minister Grootehuis, who had the Church of St. John? You live with your widowed mother? Surely I have seen and spoken with you before this?"

"Yes; but now my mother is sick—she is paralyzed. We live in the Ostenstade."

"And how got you this letter—and why bring it to me?"

"My pigeon brought it; Quentin is at Herrenmonde, and the bird has been between us once or twice. But that is not from him," she went on, and as she spoke her eyes began to sparkle angrily. "That is a trick. Some one has stolen the bird—that is a trick!"

"How do you know?"

"It is not Quentin's writing; besides, he is loyal and true. He would not dare to propose such a thing. Think of the danger if anyone had caught the bird! And, again, he always puts a word in ink that shows not unless it be warmed; on that we agreed so as to be certain that all was safe. It is not there!"

She paused as the Burgomaster held the paper again to the fire, but nothing appeared, and she continued.

"Someone has gained possession of the bird and is using it. They think I will go to the ramparts and let down a rope, and lo, a dozen Walloon soldiers will be up in a trice and the city betrayed!"

"But if you think all this, why bring the letter to me? Why not burn it and take no heed?"

"Because"—she leant forward in her excitement and put out her hands, and the Burgomaster noticed with a curious pang how thin they were; the hunger was beginning to tell then, even among the better class!—"because I would give them trick for trick. I will send back word, and I will be on the wall with a rope, but you shall be there also with your guards, and as they come up you shall seize them; and if you do not catch a prisoner worth having I shall be much surprised!"

The old man's eyes glittered as he began to understand. He looked keenly at the girl, interested, almost amused. He pulled his long gray beard slowly through his wrinkled hand, on which a diamond ring caught the light and flashed back crimson and sapphire rays. Jacqueline sat back half in the shadow, only her white face was clearly to be seen set in the frame of her dark hood.

"Then you guess," he went on slowly, looking at her with those keen and half-amused eyes, "you guess who is trying to play you this trick? Someone you know—someone who knows about you and your sweetheart, and perhaps is a little jealous?"

A wave of crimson passed over the girl's face.

"Yes," she answered shortly—"yes, I do guess, though I may be wrong. I will not tell you who it is—let us wait and see; that is, if you will come with me and bring the guard?"

The Burgomaster sat silent for a while weighing the matter in his mind. Then he looked up and spoke.

"Yes, I agree. Let us now think how best it can be managed!"

* * * * * *

"Is this the place, captain?"

The soldier whispered the question hoarsely to his leader, a handsome young nobleman, as they reached the foot of the city wall after having groped their way across the bit of spongy soil which just there intervened between the moat and the fortifications.

They had managed to wade across the water, which was somewhat choked by water plants and decaying vegetation, and now the rampart rose dark and frowning over their heads.

Just where they stood a deep shadow was cast by the moonlight from the angle of the bastion and the tower above it; but elsewhere all was full of silvery misty light, almost more baffling than the darkness.

"Yes, this is the place. Crouch down, men, and be silent as death. Then, when I am on the wall, swarm up quickly. I will gag the girl, but mind, no one is to hurt her. Then follow me and we will seize the gate and let the others in. Hush, while I give the signal."

The young man gazed up at the lofty wall. All was perfectly silent; evidently the sentries had not detected their approach; probably they were asleep, not dreaming even of danger of attack. Then he began to whistle softly a tune well known in those days.

As he gazed he saw a dark form appear, bending over the parapet.

"Is it you, Quentin?"

"Yes," he replied, in the same low voice. "Jacqueline, my dearest, is all ready?"

Something struck his cap. It was the rope—a rope ladder for greater convenience—and he caught it joyfully. Two of his men held it firmly, and the young Walloon captain climbed it, active as a cat.

Near the top a woman's hand was held out to aid him, and in a moment he was over the coping and disappeared from the sight of those below.

But they had no doubts, and one by one they swarmed up. A hand—but now it was a man's hand—was stretched out to each in turn, which each took to be aid from the comrade gone before. But when the tenth soldier went up, he fancied he heard something like a struggle and a gasp. What was going on? He paused in his climbing, and called in a low voice:

"Is it all right?"

"Yes, yes," whispered someone. "Hush, don't make a noise! Come on, man!"

So they all came up the wall—fifteen Walloon troopers—and once over they found themselves changed to fifteen prisoners. For a dark cloak had been flung over each head, a wet wad stuffed into each mouth, and then arms and legs firmly tied; there they lay, gurgling and choking, and swearing as far as they were able, in the guard-house of the gate, instead of being its masters as they intended, and about to open to the battalion of Spanish troops who were waiting out there in the fog, watching for the signal that their comrades were successful.

Presently someone entered the guard-house with a lantern. The sixteen prisoners turned their eyes and saw a tall old man and a girl. The latter held the light and she stooped and gazed earnestly into each distorted face. When she reached the captain she paused.

"It is he, Burgomaster."

"Who?" he answered, stooping down also.

"It is Captain Maximilien van Artelmonde," she replied, "only son of General van Artelmonde, in command of the Walloon and Spanish troops now beleaguering our town."

The keen old eyes of the Burgomaster began to flash and gleam. Indeed, the maiden had redeemed her promise and given him a prisoner worth having. The only son of the General. Why, his father was said to love him so passionately, that it was believed he would give any ransom to save him from suffering or peril.

The Burgomaster could have laughed aloud for very joy, but he kept a grave face, only chuckling down in his beard, "These women, these women; 'tis hard to be up to their tricks." But aloud he spoke courteously.

"I must apologize, Captain van Artelmonde," he said, "for this treatment, but I knew not we had to do with a man of your quality. Here, Jan, Dirck," he called to two of the burgher guard, "loosen these bonds and assist the gentleman to rise. I must entreat you to accept the hospitality of my poor house for the present," he went on. "May I beg of you to come with me?"

The captain stumbled to his feet and went with his captor silently, being perhaps too full of choler for speech. The Burgomaster and Jacqueline accompanied him, but no more words were spoken

till they three stood together in the room where Jacqueline had revealed her plot. It was she who spoke first.

"Where is Quentin?" she said, in a quivering voice—"where is he? And how got you the bird?"

"Quentin Alost," said the captain, and his dark eyes gleamed with wrath, "is a prisoner in camp yonder! Herrenmonde has fallen, and there I got him and your white pigeon! But he will die to-morrow!" he added viciously.

Jacqueline gave a faint cry. "Die!" she faltered.

"Yes, die; that is certain," he answered, looking with a sort of grim pleasure at her horrorstruck face, "now that our enterprise has failed."

"Then," said the Burgomaster, and, as he spoke, he laid his hand reassuringly on the shoulder of the trembling girl, "if that is so—if Quentin Alost is to die—so must you and your fifteen troopers prepare for death!"

"I," the young man turned with a haughty stare—"I! Do you know who I am, old man? Do you put the life of a vile mechanic against that of a nobleman! You are talking folly, mynheer!"

"It is folly that has a stout cord at the end of it then, Captain van Artelmonde. I do rank the life of Quentin Alost at as high a value as yours and at higher. And whether you agree with me or not, if Quentin dies, so shall you be hung up on the ramparts where your friends can see the show. So prepare yourself."

The young noble looked hard at the Burgomaster. Did he mean what he said? There was plenty of resolution in the stern old face, and he knew these burghers had most strange ideas on points of rank. He glanced round the room. Was there any chance of escape? No—none.

He was completely caught in the trap he had laid for others, and by a girl too, this minister's daughter, with whom he had fallen so foolishly in love that last summer at Ghent, where she had been staying with his lady aunt, who had taken a fancy to the handsome clever girl.

He was full of rage and mortification; but still, life was sweet. His eyes rested wrathfully, yet full of passion, on Jacqueline who stood, leaning one hand on the table, her face white and set.

"Then if you would save the life of your boorish lover," he cried, nearly beside himself with spite and disappointment, "you must furnish me a messenger to the General, my father!"

Jacqueline had a retort on her lips, but the Burgomaster checked her with a curious smile.

"Never mind his words," he remarked; "what he means is that he is willing to save his own life. Yes, sir, write"—he put ink and paper before him—"write as I direct, and I will find a messenger."

Gloomily the young captain obeyed.

"We have fallen into a trap," dictated the Burgomaster, "and are prisoners, and unless you send Quentin Alost safe and well into the city by noon I and the others must die on the gallows."

Here the captain paused.

"You will exchange me for this Quentin, then?"

"Ah, no, noble sir," replied the Burgomaster dryly; "oh, no! I would not do you so great an indignity as to value you alone against a vile mechanic, as you just now termed our friend. No, no—that is only a preliminary. I would beg you to resume your writing."

"The Burgomaster," he dictated, as the captain reluctantly took up the pen, "tells me that there is still food enough in the town to last them some time, but that they have none to spare for strangers, and that therefore unless you raise the siege very shortly I must starve."

The young man flung down the pen.

"I will not write it!" he cried.

"Content," said the Burgomaster; "then you hang to-morrow on the ramparts!"

The prisoner writhed in his chair.

"It is too hard," he exclaimed; "you make me a craven and a traitor!"

"And what would you have made of me?" suddenly cried Jacqueline. "If I had not detected your vile trick, what would have been happening now?"

"You would have been safe," he said; "none would have hurt you. We should have been riding now to Antwerp to our wedding!"

"Our wedding—our wedding!" she exclaimed. "Do you think it I would not marry you before, that I would now? My friends would have been betrayed, my own people murdered, the town sacked and burnt, and instead of the quiet sleep that is now round us, the shrieks and screams of tortured, dying men and women.

"And you—you would have made me do this! Oh, you false, black-hearted traitor! If you had been a Spaniard one might have understood; but you have been bribed by foreign gold to betray your own country-people!"

"Hush, my daughter," interrupted the Burgomaster, "we waste time in these recriminations. Sir, will you write, or will you not? It is no use to remonstrate—you must write or die!"

He did write, and ere noon Quentin was safe in the Burgomaster's house. But what somewhat surprised the old magistrate was that the other conditions were also accepted without hesitation, and that that very night the Leaguer was broken up.

The next day, however, when the vanguard of the Prince's army marched into the city, bringing news of a victory won over a large detachment of the Spanish force, he saw that it was possible the General had other motives for his action than the desire of saving his only son.

But the little town rejoiced greatly at its deliverance, for there were not many more sacks of flour left in the magazines, and even the rats were getting scarce, and when two months later Quentin and Jacqueline were married at the "Groote-kirche," the burghers gave the bride a handsome dowry to prove that they felt she deserved well of the city.

ON YOUR GUARD.

"Beware of pickpockets" is a notification familiar to all travelers; but few indeed have sufficient knowledge of their tricks and wiles to avoid the depredations of professional thieves, and particularly those of the educated light-fingered gentry who frequent the crowded quarters of a city.

Experienced hands always work in couples—the "faker" (actual thief) and a "pal" to cover him. If the victim is to be relieved of a pin, the robbery is carried on in this way:

It is essential, first of all, that the gentleman to be operated upon should be made to stoop, which is not difficult to accomplish if he carries a stick or umbrella.

What is easier than for one of the well-dressed rascals—for their clothes must always be in the height of fashion and their linen of the best—while sauntering along to accidentially knock a stick out of the hand of an unsuspecting individual.

Generally both stoop simultaneously to recover it, and the stick is restored to the gentleman with a smile and an apology; but in those brief moments the pin has disappeared and is being carried away in the palm of the "pal" in an opposite direction.

Assume for a moment that the enterprising couple are after your purse; the more dexterous of the two will softly feel the pocket.

Gently but quickly a small instrument (purposely for purse stealing) is inserted into the pocket, while a slight pressure on the handle causes a claw or gripper to close, and then the instrument is gently withdrawn, together with the purse.

During this time, the eyes of the confederate have been fixed upon those of the person whose pocket has been picked, and he is ever ready to distract the latter's attention should any bungle occur.

The purse is got rid of at the earliest possible moment, and the money thrust loosely into the pocket.

A watch is called a "kittle" or "super," while a chain is a "slag;" and artists in this line would despise a "snatcher," or common thief, who makes a snatch at a chain and bolts with it. Instead of that, they would await their opportunity, and probably while standing close to their intended victim one would ostentatiously refer to some object, with the almost invariable result that the stranger's attention is at once attracted to it.

Then the chain is cut with sharp tweezers, and both that and the watch immediately stolen, while the owner is left totally unconscious of his loss.

A diamond is a "spark," and it is quickly taken from its setting and disposed of alone, while the gold is dealt with separately.

Ring stealing is seldom indulged in, unless the victim is in a state of intoxication or is innocent enough to succumb to the confidence trick, and foolishly parts with it in a weak moment to the apparently wealthy and good-natured stranger, who for no obvious motive suddenly takes such an interest in the greenhorn about to be plucked.

After a successful coup a swell-mobsman will change his attire, with a view to avoiding identification if he should be arrested on suspicion.

A change of dress four or five times a day is of frequent occurrence, for if a prosecutor is called upon to identify a man placed amongst others to be picked out from the file, different clothes go far to mystify and materially assist the thief in his defence afterwards.

An old thief is never trapped by the seductive advertisement one occasionally sees offering a reward for the return of property "lost between so and so." He knows better; for such an advertisement rarely appears the day after the alleged losing, and it is generally prompted.

On the same principle he fights shy of the pawnbrokers as much as possible, as he knows full well that a list of stolen property is daily sent to the pawnbrokers, who must detain any suspicious person presenting an article to be taken in pledge and of which he cannot give a satisfactory account.

Once let a swell-mobsman get away with his plunder it is rarely indeed that the goods are traced unless one of the gang gives information. But the fact that there are fewer traitors than one would suppose is not due to the time-worn adage, "Honor against thieves." The true cause is the mutual distrust which they entertain.

Each knows something of the other that would send him to do time, and therefore with the fraternity silence is golden; for even amongst themselves there is a constant fear of each other.

He Didn't Believe It.—"Here is something at which I suppose you'll turn up your nose," said Mrs. Naggley severely to her husband the other evening when they each sat reading.

"What is it?" asked Naggley indifferently.

"Oh, it's no use wasting my breath reading it to you. You'd say it wasn't so, because you haven't heart and soul enough to appreciate its truth. There are hundreds—yes, thousands—of men who would say in a minute that it was so, but you—well! I might as well read such sentiments to that cat lying there on the sofa.

"They'd be appreciated more than you can appreciate them. There you sit coldly indifferent to anything I say and inwardly sneer at me for trying to arouse a little sentiment in your callous nature. I don't dare read it to you when I come across anything that touches me, for ——"

"Didn't I ask you to read it to me?"

"Yes; but in such a voice and manner that I shan't read a word of it to you, and of course you don't care.

"I tell you, Joe Naggley, it's a hard trial for a woman of a refined and tender and sensitive nature to be repulsed every time she attempts to awaken corresponding feelings of tenderness in her husband.

"I see now that I made a mistake in not marrying a man who could, in some slight degree, sympathize with me, but years of cruel indifference and actual coldness have taught me the folly of expecting anything but scorn and sarcasm and abuse from the man from whom I have a right to expect very different treatment, and by whom I have always done my full duty with or without even thanks, to say nothing of love and affection.

"Oh, yes, I would rattle and snap my paper if I were you, Joe Naggley. Simply because I came across something sweet and true that I felt as if I'd like to read to you! But I will read it to you, and you can hide your head in shame. Listen to this—

"A wife is a gift bestowed upon a man to reconcile him to the loss of paradise.

"The man who wrote that had true feeling, but you—what! It's rot? Of course it is! It's what I thought you'd say! It's what I might have known an unfeeling brute like you would say, but it's true, Joe Naggley, only you are too coarse-grained to appreciate it."

It is not generally known that the body of King Alphonso XII., although all the full honors of the church were conceded thereto at the time of his demise, still remains above ground awaiting final interment. This is in accordance with the statutes of the royal house of Spain, which prescribe that after his death, the remains of each king shall be laid on a stone slab in one of the caves of the great pile of rocks upon which the gloomy Escurial Palace is built. There it gradually undergoes a kind of natural drying process, and when entirely reduced to the mummy form, it is placed in the tomb prepared for it.

At Home and Abroad.

By the use of the "X" rays another curious discovery has been made abroad. A painting, as to the authorship of which there has long existed some doubt, was "radiographed," whereupon the artist's name (Albert Durer) was revealed beneath the accumulated dirt of many years, thus establishing the authenticity of the picture.

A certain gentleman recently created a sensation in France by utilising the alarm cord in a railway train. His speedy appearance at a certain village being worth more than the fine to him, he got in an express train, stopped it, paid his fine, and went about his business. The railway authorities are puzzling over the means of preventing his example from being imitated.

When a South American cowboy desires to catch a bull or cow, he rides up alongside and stoops down in his saddle, grasps the creature's tail and, with a sharp, peculiar twist, sends the animal rolling on its back. From the force with which it falls, the creature's horns almost invariably pin its head to the soft ground, giving the cowboy time to dismount and sit on its head, holding the animal helpless to rise, while a companion ties its legs.

The Duchess of Marlborough, Consuelo Vanderbilt, knows the name of every servant on the Blenheim estate, and takes a deep interest in the circumstances of her husband's dependants. Many times has she received confidences from those with whom she has been brought in contact, and has given advice and practical help in numerous cases. It is said that she is very popular with the children of the neighborhood, who run to her when she walks by the cottages, and are not the least in awe of her.

Sparrows are the rabbits of the feathered world in point of multiplication, frequently producing more than twenty young ones in a season, three or four broods of six or seven each being not unusual. In six years the progeny of one single pair of sparrows will amount to millions, as evidence the alarming rapidity with which the United States, New Zealand and Australia are now infested, the number originally taken over by emigrants being very small. Complaint from America, Australia and New Zealand agriculturists of the ravages committed by the birds are even more bitter than those of English farmers. The total number of sparrows are out of all proportion to those of other species of birds.

Deafness Cannot be Cured.

by local applications, as they cannot reach the diseased portion of the ear. There is only one way to cure Deafness, and that is by constitutional remedies. Deafness is caused by an inflamed condition of the mucous lining of the Eustachian Tube. When this tube gets inflamed you have a rumbling sound or imperfect hearing, and when it is entirely closed Deafness is the result, and unless the inflammation can be taken out and this tube restored to its normal condition, hearing will be destroyed forever; nine cases out of ten are caused by catarrh, which is nothing but an inflamed condition of the mucous surfaces.

We will give One Hundred Dollars for any case of Deafness (caused by catarrh) that cannot be cured by Hall's Catarrh Cure. Send for circulars, free.

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The Ladies' Home Journal

Philadelphia

Our Young Folks.

THE CHILDREN'S TIME.

BY E. C.

Christmas is the children's time;
Make them happy then.
Make them gladly welcome it
When it comes again.

Christmas is the children's time;
We of older years
See the light of Christmas-tide
Through a mist of tears.

Christmas is the children's time;
'Tis the birthday feast
Of the Child whose star once led
Wise men from the East.

And let us, at Christmas-tide,
Do our best to make
All the little ones be glad
For the Child's dear sake.

IN THE TOY SHOP.

BY F. G. T.

OURS was a small German village which boasted of but a single shop, this was not very attractive in appearance, but of the usual kind, small, low, and dark, with gas in the one window that was anything but bright, and a doorway that was anything but a lofty one.

In the window there was usually a plateful of rosy-cheeked apples, near to a heap of nuts, two or three jars of sweets, making a tempting display to the little folks, while a few lemons, tapes, buttons and pins completed the display. Inside the shop good old Mrs. Hollyberry kept a very small stock of useful things required by her neighbors, who were as poor as herself.

But when Christmas Eve came there was a grand transiórmation. The window was cleaned, and Mrs. Hollyberry removed all the tapes, buttons and pins, and filled their place with toys of the most wonderful description.

There were brilliant red dogs, looking as fierce as lions; black cats, with two wide yellow stripes down their backs; brown and dapple-gray horses on wheels with stiff hairy tails standing straight out; doils clothed in marvelous costumes; boxes of tin and wooden soldiers; mewing cats, tops, penny trumpets, tea sets; and, in short, toys of all kinds.

There never had been such a gorgeous display of toys in the village before, and their gay colors shone forth in happy contrast with the snow that covered the ground and roofs, until they looked as if they were bearing great white pillows on their heads.

Everybody stopped to look at Mrs. Hollyberry's window, it was the one event in the village. But the children stood before it the whole day long, with their feet cooling in the melting snow, their ears crimson with the cold, and their hands thrust into their pockets, or under their cloaks and shawls. Even when it grew dark they still lingered, knowing that Mrs. Hollyberry would be sure to light her lamp, and then the toys would look prettier than ever.

Finally the lamp from the ceiling was lighted, and a brilliant glow was sent over the toys and fruit in the window. The children pressed up closer and closer, coughing, sneezing, chattering and continually stamping their feet to keep them warm.

The toys seemed to feel their importance, and were as proud and pleased—those common little toys—as the finest wax dolls and the largest rocking-horses in any large shop in a town. They looked out on the little round faces lighted up by Mrs. Hollyberry's lamp, and thought what a pretty sight they made.

Meanwhile the boys and girls gazed on until their mothers appeared at the open door of their houses, suddenly put an end to their pleasures by calling them in to bed.

Slowly they went off, one or two at a time, with many backward glances, the last of all having gently licked the glass in front with his tongue to clear away the vapor, which concealed the largest and most tempting of all the horses from his view.

Soon the children were all safe in bed, then the mothers started out with their baskets in their hands to the shop, where the toys were still looking out for purchasers.

Mrs. Hollyberry showed her toys one by one, and the mothers made their choice and paid her, some with silver and others with very worn and battered copper coins, and all went away with one or more toys.

By degrees the dolls disappeared from the window, until at last only two were left, but they were so dear that no one could be persuaded to buy them. Then came the turn of the tin and wooden soldiers, and the brave little fellows, as they rolled to the bottom of the baskets, felt as if drilling was at an end for them, and they were all commanders-in-chief at last, and decorated with medals and ribbons all over their little chests.

The gingerbread, apples, nuts and oranges, also found their way into the baskets, and left empty plates behind them; the bottles of sweets, all new this evening, were now only half full, and almost the only toys that remained to keep company with the dolls, were a donkey with panniers and a nodding head, a beautiful wooden horse with a red saddle and bridle, a barking dog, a cat with a group of little kittens, a drum and a dancing Punch.

All these toys were too costly for Mrs. Hollyberry's customers, and she shut the door on the last of them and shook her head mournfully, put up the shutters and went to bed to dream of the 'Squire coming in a carriage and four to buy up all the toys she had left.

The shop was quiet now, and all the toys commenced to dream. The cat imagined that it was purring in front of a hot fire, and at the same time, scratching up a tender little mouse; the dog dreamed he was gnawing a delicious bone, and the dolls dreamed sweetly of the deft little hands of girls dressing and undressing them, and giving tea parties in their honor.

The rejected toys had dreamed as sweet as those that had been carried off in the baskets, for Christmas eve is the time when they speak and move; they throw off their coverings of cardboard and wood, and although for all the rest of the year they are motionless, sleepy and speechless, when midnight comes on that one night they rouse up and are alive at once.

When the bells at midnight sang out gently, "ding-dong, ding-dong," for fear of rousing the children, no words can express the delighted happiness of the toys.

The trumpets were seized with a sudden fit of gaiety, and blew long blasts; the cats squeezed their own bellows, and mewed Christmas greetings to each other; the dolls shook out their skirts, and curtseyed; the dogs and horses sang carols together, and the donkeys joined in the chorus; even the tea sets rattled pleasantly as they shook themselves free of their boxes and took their place to dance a quadrille with the dinner sets. There was not a toy in the village that did not come to life, and show its happiness in some manner or other.

Old Mrs. Hollyberry heard nothing of all this. She was wrapped up snugly under the blankets, and never dreamed that toys could dance and sing as they were then doing on the counter of her little shop, and in nearly every cottage in the village, but not in all, for in some the fathers and mothers were too poor to be able to buy even the cheapest toys for their children.

But although Mrs. Hollyberry was sound asleep, it was an odd thing that she could see as well as she had ever seen in her life, and what she saw was this:—

The shop door opened, and Santa Claus walked in and gathered in his arms all the pretty but dear toys that were left in her shop, because no one could afford to buy them.

Mrs. Hollyberry was not a bit astonished or angry, and only said to herself, "Nothing is too dear for Santa Claus; he dearly loves good children, and is sure to leave the money in my drawer."

When he had collected all the toys she saw him enter his sleigh and skim rapidly over the snow-covered ground, stopping at the cottages where there were no toys for the children, dropping gently down the chimney a toy for each child, not one being forgotten.

When Mrs. Hollyberry awoke she remembered what she had seen in the night, and was pleased to think that the very poorest children would have the nicest toys, and she was not at all frightened about her money, as indeed she had no reason to be, for when she looked in the drawer, she found that Santa Claus had paid her honestly for all the toys he had taken to give away.

But who can tell the surprise and delight of the children and their parents at the unexpected gifts? The parents knew their children had been remembered by Santa Claus himself; the children did not question where the toys came from, but it was the happiest and merriest Christmas they had ever spent, for never before had they had such beautiful presents given to them.

GAMES FOR LITTLE FOLKS.

LAST PAIR FORWARD.—This is the name of a pretty romping game played as follows:—The children form pairs and stand in a row, one pair behind another, while one player, chosen by lot, places himself at the head of the line, claps his hands and says, "Last pair forward!" At these words the hindermost couple must run to the front, one going right and one left of the line, and try to join hands at the top. The clapper endeavors to prevent this by trying to catch the advancing players before they can join hands. If he succeeds, the one caught forms with him a new couple, and they take their place at the front, while the one not caught becomes catcher. If he fails, however, and the advancing pair succeeded in joining hands at the front, they remain there while the catcher resumes his place at the head of the line, and the game proceeds as before. The catcher must, of course, remain catcher until he catches somebody.

THE HAT.—This is a game which may be played for stakes, or not, as decided. The players are divided into two opposing parties. They sit in two half circles at the same distance every way round a hat placed on the floor in the centre of them.

Two different colored packs of cards are then given, one to each party, and by them equally dealt out to each player. The aim is then for each player to throw a card into the hat—a by no means easy achievement. The cards have a way of flying over it, or round it, in a provoking way, even when thrown by good players. The floor is soon littered with failures. The game is played till both packs are exhausted; then those cards that have reached the hat are counted, and the side that has most of its own colors in, wins the stakes, or at least is victor. This is a very amusing game for a Christmas evening party.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER.—This is a new form of some of the games of guessing which may be played at this season. The players may dress in turn as the mysterious stranger, coming with stealthy strides into the room wrapped in a long coat, with bonnet veiled, or hat pulled down over the forehead. This visitor disguised sits in a chair in the middle of the room, seeming to be thinking deeply, never speaking, and noticing no one till the others guess the character represented. It may be that of a well-known person of the past or present, famous for something of which the mysterious stranger is thinking—Tell and his apple, Columbus and America, Napoleon, etc. The others talk, trying first to guess the time and nation; the stranger's manner guides them by groaning, weeping, doleful shakes of the head, when they are wrong; joy, jumps, general delight when they are guessing well, and whoever gives the final guess, and names the character intended, becomes the next mysterious stranger.

RUSSIAN GOSSIP.—This is exceedingly amusing and can be participated in by the older members of the party as well as the young people. The players all sit in a row, and one is selected and sent out of the room. The player who sits at the head of the row immediately goes out and tells the outsider some anecdote, or any little news of which she can easily make a short and interesting story; then she returns and resumes her former position in the line. The next player goes out, and hears the same story from the lips of the outside player, who then returns to her seat. Another goes out and hears the story from its last recipient; then the one who has told it returns to the circle. Another goes out, and hears it from the late hearer, and so on till all have heard the story, and then the last tells it. It must be written down, we should observe, by the first teller, to insure accuracy, and the amusement of the party will be considerable when they hear how different the version of the last hearer will be from that of the first speaker. Generally they differ entirely.

IN estimating the worth of men, keep a guard upon your judgment, that it be not biassed by wealth or splendor. At the same time, there is no necessity for treating with cynical insolence every person whom Providence hath placed in an eminent station, merely because your experience teaches you that very few of the great are deserving of the esteem of the wise and good. Consider the temptations which beset the great, and render it impossible for them to come at truth; and make all reasonable allowances. If you see anything like real goodness of heart, admire it as an instance of excellence, which in a private station would have been considered almost perfection.

The World's Events.

In St. Petersburg no outdoor musical performances are permitted.

A red hot iron will soften old putty so that it can be readily removed.

False teeth are now made from paper, and are said to last a lifetime.

The Chinese national anthem is so long that people take half a day to listen to it.

It is stated on high authority that one-half of the flesh eaten in Germany is horse meat.

It is reported of a Kensington cat that her last family of kittens has brought up her total to 105.

The oldest coin known is in the mint collection in Philadelphia. It was coined at Aegina in the year 700 B. C.

A horse will eat in a year nine times his own weight, a cow nine times, an ox six times, and a sheep six times.

According to the beliefs of the Arizona Indians, the cliff dwellers built along the bluffs because they feared another deluge.

It has been estimated that electric railways have already displaced 1,100,000 car horses. This is probably less than the actual number.

In France, if a structural defect in a bicycle causes an injury to the person using it, the manufacturer is legally accountable for damages.

In many parts of Germany the roots of the dandelion are gathered late, dried, roasted, ground, and substituted for coffee by the poor.

Michigan has passed a law fixing a heavy penalty upon railroad companies for the employment of persons addicted to the use of intoxicants.

Cyclometers are used in cabs in Berlin, Leipsic, and Dresden. They record the exact amount of miles traveled and the legal fare of the occupants.

The slowest breeders of all known animals, a pair of elephants would become the progenitors of 19,000,000 elephants in 750 years, if death did not interfere.

A single bee, with all its industry, energy, and the innumerable journeys it has to perform, will not collect much more than a teaspoonful of honey in a single season.

Gray hairs at an early age are hereditary in certain families. It is thought to be a result of men with dark hair marrying women with dark hair through several generations.

Cries of sea birds, especially sea gulls, are very valuable as fog signals. The birds cluster on the cliffs and coast, and their cries warn boatmen that they are near the land.

The oak furnishes food and home for 309 species of insects, the elm 61, and the pine for 151. In addition, these trees respectively furnish lodging and shelter to 150, 30, and 29 species.

Were it not for the multitude of storks that throng to Egypt every winter there would be no living in the country, for after every inundation frogs appear in most incredible numbers.

The name "Rothschild," so famous in finance, signifies in German "Red Shield," and is taken from the sign of a shop in the Jews' quarter, Frankfort, where the foundations of the family fortunes were laid.

The air tight compartment theory of building ships was copied from a provision of nature shown in the case of the nautilus. The shell of this animal has forty or fifty compartments, into which air or water may be admitted to allow the occupant to sink or float as it pleases.

Mrs. B., of Evanston, Illinois, writes: "Thank you for check. This work has made our Church Building Fund steadily increase."

Mrs. M., of Chicago, says: "Accept thanks for check for $250—for prize offer."

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The Curtis Publishing Company
Philadelphia

THE LADIES' HOME JOURNAL

THE QUEST.

BY E. E. B.

"Somewhere I know that I shall find
A place wherein to dwell," he said,
"Where all the past is left behind,
And not a ghost shall leave the dead
To trouble me. But where, or when,
Ah, that I know not." So he went
His way alone, while other men
Went on life's rounds in dull content.

He journeyed East, and found not rest,
He journeyed West, and sought in vain.
And, weary with his fruitless quest,
He sought the shores of home again,
And there among the olden hills
He found the peace so many crave,
The refuge-land from earthly ills,
The rest he sought for—in a grave!

THE SEASON'S WREATH.

The practice of leafy decorations wreaths and festoons about Christmas is of very high antiquity,—and has been ascribed, by various writers, to various sources. They who are desirous of tracing a Christian observance to a Christian cause, remind us of those figurative expressions, in the prophets, which speak of the Messiah as the "Branch of righteousness," etc., and describe, by natural allusions, the fertility which should attend his coming. —"The Lord shall comfort Zion," says Isaiah: "he will comfort all her waste places, and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord."

Again:—"The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine-tree and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious." And Nehemiah, on an occasion of rejoicing, orders the people, after the law of Moses, to "go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees;" and to make booths thereof, "every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God," and in the streets:—"and all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity," sat under these booths, "and there was very great gladness."

A modern writer asks if this custom may not be referred, as well as that of the palms on Palm Sunday, to that passage, in the Scripture account of Christ's entry into Jerusalem, which states that the multitude "cut down branches from the trees, and strewed them in the way."

The practice, however, of introducing flowers and branches amongst the tokens of festivity, seems, and very naturally, to have existed universally and at all times. It was, as we know, a pagan manifestation of rejoicing and worship; and is forbidden, on that express ground, in early councils of the Christian church. Hone, in his Every-day Book, quotes Polydore Vergil, to the effect that "trymming of the temples with hangynges, flowers, boughes and garlandes, was taken of the heathen people, whiche decked their idols and houses with suche array;" and it came under the list of abominations denounced by the Puritans, for the same reason.

The practice was also in use amongst the nations both of Gothic and Celtic origin; and Brand gives the reason of the practice, amongst the votaries of Druidism. "The houses," he says, "were decked with evergreens in December, that the sylvan spirits might repair to them, and remain unnipped with frost and cold winds, until a milder season had renewed the foliage of their darling abodes."

In England and thence to America, the practice, whencesoever derived, has existed from the very earliest days. In former times, as we learn from Stow, in his Survey of London, not only were houses and churches decorted with evergreens, but also the conduits, standards, and crosses in the streets;—and, in our own day, it continues to form a garniture not only of our temples and houses but constitutes a portion of the striking display made at this festive season, in markets, and from the windows of our shops.

The plants most commonly in use, for this purpose, appear to have generally been the holly, the ivy, the laurel, the rosemary and the mistletoe, —although the decorations were by no means limited to these materials. Brand expresses some surprise at finding cypress included in the list, and observes that he "should as soon have expected to see the yew as the cypress used on this joyful occasion." The fact, however, is, that yew is frequently mentioned amongst the Christmas decorations,—as well as box, pine, fir, and the larger part of the Christmas plants.

The greater number of these appear to have been so used, not on account of any mystic meanings supposed to reside therein, but simply for the sake of their rich berries. Stow speaks of the houses being decked with "whatsoever the year afforded to be green;" —and Sandys observes that, "at present, great variety is observed in decorating our houses and buildings, and many flowers are introduced that were unknown to our ancestors, but whose varied colors add to the cheerful effect, —as the chrysanthemum, satin-flower, etc., mingling with the red berry of the holly, and the mystic mistletoe."

About 1845 when the Christmas tree began to be talked of in England a writer of the time says: "There is a very beautiful custom which we find mentioned, in connexion with the subject of evergreens, as existing, at this season of the year, in some parts of Germany and Sicily. A large bough is set up in the principal room, the smaller branches of which are hung with little presents suitable to the different members of the household. A good deal of innocent mirth and spirit of courtesy, is produced by this custom."

Herrick, the old poet, carries this custom, of adorning houses with evergreens, over the entire year; and assigns to each plant its peculiar and appropriate season.

Of those plants, then, which are considered as containing meanings that make them appropriate decorations for the Christmas-tide, the laurel, or bay, may be dismissed in a few words. Since the days of the ancient Romans, this tree has been, at all times, dedicated to all purposes of joyous commemoration, —and its branches have been used as the emblems of peace and victory and joy. Of course, its application is obvious to a festival which includes them all;—which celebrates "peace on earth," —"Glad tidings of great joy,"—and a triumph achieved over the powers of evil and the original curse, by the coming of the Saviour.

We may add that, beside forming a portion of the household decorations, it is usual, in some places, to fling branches and sprigs of laurel on the Christmas fire,—and seek for omens, amid the curling and crackling of its leaves.

Grains of Gold.

We can never die too early for others when we live only for ourselves.

Great powers and natural gifts do not bring privileges to their possessors so much as they bring duties.

How can we expect that a friend should keep our secret, whilst we are convincing her that it is more than we can do ourselves.

Do daily and hourly your duty; do it patiently and thoroughly. Do it as it presents itself; do it at the moment, and let it be its own reward.

Hope never hurts anyone, it never interferes with duty; nay, it always strengthens to the performance of duty, gives courage and clears the judgment.

Femininities.

Woman: The morning star of our youth—the day star of our manhood—the evening star of our age. Heaven bless our stars!

In Paris it is invariably the ladies of the house who, when tea is served in the drawing-room, carry round the cups to the gentlemen present; and no exception to this rule is ever made.

Lord Archibald Campbell's daughter, Lady Elspeth, is an expert player of the bagpipes, and has made the instrument of her people more favorably known to her fashionable companions than of old.

"I feel so miserable!" she said after they had retired from the Christmas table.

"What's the matter?"

"Mrs. Robinson told me a secret to-day, and I've forgotten what it was!"

Women's feet, an artist declares, are gradually becoming more beautiful, very pointed boots and shoes being now seldom used save for evening wear. Athletics and outdoor exercises generally are, he predicts, likely to widen the tread.

Little Miss Mugg (assuming a wearied air): "Our folks is all glad the opera season is over."

Little Miss Freckles (spitefully): "Yes, it must be real tryin' to see other folks havin' such good times."

The women of Iceland have full municipal suffrage, and vote in all church and parish matters. There is also a women's political society, and public meetings are called when questions affecting the interest of the sex are before the Legislative Assembly. These meetings are addressed by women.

"Miss Scadds broke off her engagement with Mr. Spudds because he sent her for a birthday present a book entitled, 'How to be Beautiful.'"

"It serves him right. He should have sent her a book called, 'How to Remain Beautiful.'"

A teacher was giving her pupils a lesson on liberality, when one of them said, "When I have a box of chocolates, I always give everybody in the house one; but I like to give mamma one more than the rest."

"Why is that', Johnny?"

"Because she always thanks me and hands it back."

"How are you and your husband getting on?" asked Mrs. Elderly of Mrs. Newlywed.

"We had a row yesterday. He said something I didn't like—something that made me suspect he wished I had never been born."

"What did he say?"

"He said he wished his mother-in-law was an old maid."

The maids of honor of the Empress of Russia are generally recruited from the daughters of superior officers or high Court functionaries, and educated at special schools, where they are taught the rigid etiquette of their future station.

A purse that is having a good sale is designed to frustrate the efforts of the snatcher. It is a purse of the long variety, and by a short strap is attached to a leathern wristlet.

Madame Bernhardt will not exercise, and hates fruit, unless she happens to feel in a mood of eating it, and still she has a handsome head of hair, which, some of the doctors say, is quite remarkable, in view of the fact that fruit and exercise make beautiful hair. She makes her hair grow winter and summer by exposing it. For several hours a day it hangs down her back, with the air blowing through it and the sun touching it. Her theory is that wherever the hairpins touch the hair it will be dull and glossless.

Grace (to her bosom friend, who is caressing a blear-eyed poodle): "I hear your engagement with Mr. Stebbens has been broken off."

Bertha (with a sigh): "Yes, I found that his love for me was not the deep, true love which nothing on earth can change, so I was compelled to let him go."

Grace: "Why, how did you find it out?"

Bertha: "Easily enough. He got so angry every time that poor Flossie bit him."

The wicked sisters, however, could not wear the golden slipper.

"Yes," answered the father somewhat reluctantly when the prince asked him if he had another daughter, and then Cinderella came in from the kitchen.

She wore the golden slipper very comfortably, and the prince made her his wife.

It is not known precisely what this legend is designed to expound. Possibly it is the fact that the girl who marries usually has to go and put her foot in it.

Sweet Girl: "George, although I refused to marry you, I promised to be a friend to you, you know."

George (gloomily): "Y-e-s."

"And you know you said I might, and you said you'd be a friend to me."

"Did I?"

"Yes, I'm sure you said something like that."

"Well, I'll try."

"That's good of you. Can you spare a little time for me now?"

"A lifetime, if you ask it."

"No, only a few hours."

"Certainly. What is it you want?"

"That hook-nosed old lady over there is my chaperon. I wish you'd take her off and keep her with you the rest of this evening; I want to have a quiet little chat with Mr. Hansom."

Masculinities.

Philosophers are simply people who don't want what they can't get.

A.: "Does your wife open your letters?" B.: "No; I told her she might."

"Hepperton says he won't marry any one but a widow." "I hope he won't marry mine."

Philosophy cannot do away with a single trial or trouble: the best it can do is to reduce them to their lowest fighting weight.

As soon as a girl gets a fussy white dress on and a fan she thinks a man ought rather to look at her than smoke a corncob pipe.

"Does my whistling disturb you?" "O, not in the least. I'm used to hearing men whistle. I'm a collector for a millinery house."

Without the express consent of his wife, no married Austrian subject can procure a passport for journeying beyond the frontier.

Best Man, a month after the wedding: "Well, what's the news?" Benedict, who caught a tartar: "Matrimonial noose, that's all."

"Marriage," said the sentimental girl, "is a lottery." "But the trouble is," said the pessimistic bachelor, "that the man takes most of the chances."

A witty old divine says, "Angels can tell about how much religion you have by the amount of rain it takes to keep you at home from divine service."

She, trustingly: "Am I the only girl you ever loved, Jack?" Jack: "Why, yes, certainly, my dear—that is to say, the only girl I ever loved as I love you, my darling!"

Mrs. Jones: "I wonder what it is that makes baby so wakeful?" Mr. Jones, savagely: "Why, it's hereditary, of course!—this is what comes of your sitting up nights waiting for me!"

In Japan etiquette has to do with such an apparently simple matter as entering a gate. If a person is a man of the highest rank, he enters by the centre and largest gate; if not, he goes in by one of the two side-gates which flank it.

The Spanish peasant works every day and dances half the night, and yet eats only black bread, onion, and water-melon. The Smyrna porter eats only a little fruit and some olives, yet he carries with ease his load of two hundred pounds.

He, just after the proposal: "I'm so delighted, my darling, that you do not object to smoke?" She: "Oh, no, I like it! But mamma can't bear it." He, softly: "You are my first thought. I will smoke continually when we have our little house."

The last peer to be executed in England was Lord Ferrers. The privileges of a lord do not stop short even at the gallows, and any member of the House of Lords who has the misfortune to be hanged, dies with a golden cord around his neck. Lord Ferrers was hanged in his wedding clothes, and was driven to the gallows in a landau. The scaffold was draped with black at the expense of his lordship's family.

An old gentleman was present at the reading of the will of a distant relative. He had hardly expected to find himself remembered in it; but pretty soon a clause was read in which a certain field was willed to him. That was good. But the document went on to bequeath the old gray mare in the said field to some one else—a man with whom the old gentleman was not on friendly terms. That was too much for his equanimity, and he interrupted the solemn proceedings and brought a smile to the faces of the company by exclaiming, "Then she's eating my grass!"

Before a Girl Marries

She ought, if possible, to learn to play the piano. Music is a great factor in a home. THE LADIES' HOME JOURNAL will send a girl, free of all expense, to any musical conservatory she likes; pay her board and give her a piano in her own room. 300 girls have already been so educated, free.

The Curtis Publishing Company, Philadelphia

Latest Fashion Phases.

While it's naturally expected that interest in Christmas is just now paramount to everything else, there is still a chance that regard for the most recent doings in the world of fashion is not altogether lost sight of.

Bodices of colored liberty velveteen are in vogue, and they are made in the form of a shirt waist, with collar and cuffs of cream guipure. Belts and girdles were never so pretty, and no costume is complete without one or other accessory. The blouse is perhaps the most popular bodice, but there are as well basques with pointed and square tabs.

Broad shoulder effects are one of the features of this season's fashions. Such results are obtained by tabs, ruffles and epaulets. Entire bodices are made of stitched bands of silk alternated with lace insertion. Fur was never more in demand. Bands of it decorate skirts and finish the neck and sleeves of bodices. It is combined with all materials.

In facts, it trims lace ruffles that edge the front of the gowns, and it is put to a novel use when applied to lace ruffles that trim long lace scarfs, which are again in vogue. They are found in cream, white and black lace and are about two yards long, with frilled and tucked ends and little bonds of fur set in between the tucks. Neck decorations of all kinds are a necessity. Full ruches of mousseline de soie, Brussels net, silk mull and lace are worn, as are also fur boas.

Fur boas are plain and combined with lace and flowers. Muffs are to be more in evidence than for the last few winters, and they will be worn larger. Fancy muffs will be elaborately trimmed with lace and animals' tails and heads. Marten, sable and astrakhan are much used for toques, turbans and capotes. Fur is employed to edge hats, and many of the flat crowns are entirely of fur.

Theatre-cloaks this season are most beautiful. They are made to cover the dress entirely so that a delicate skirt is kept free from soils, and a shabby one is hidden from view. The cloaks are made in a variety of materials—velvet, brocade, corded silk, or fine cloth, or a combination of materials.

One model was of silver-gray brocade, lined throughout with pale shell pink broche; the sleeves were of gray mirror velvet, also the band down each side the front, on this velvet band was laid handsome steel and turquoise passementerie; the high collar is of brocade, lined with the same; it is fastened above the bust with a handsome jeweled clasp; waterfalls of lace trim each side the front from the fastening nearly to the waist.

The style may be effectively copied in much cheaper materials; for instance, the cloak would look really well in a pretty light cloth, and might be lined through with sateen, the front only being faced in with broche or silk; the sleeves and strap down the front could be in velveteen or bengaline, the whole forming a useful and becoming evening wrap.

In baby jewelry one may buy sets of pins with pearls or turquoises set in dulled gold, armlets of old-fashioned coral and sets of studs linked together by a slender gold chain to serve as buttons for dresses. Tiny rings and bracelets and strings of gold beads are worn by many babies, and rings of polished silver are what the modern baby cuts her pearly teeth upon.

Silver rattles are of all shapes and sizes. Some are like miniature tambourines, with many jingling bells; others have dolls' heads on the top of an ivory stick, and others have grotesque faces or heads of dogs or cats wearing collars of bells.

Carriage robes of white Thibet and crib blankets and comfortables of eiderdown and silk, fancy pillow shams and odd pillows for crib or carriage are all acceptable gifts to the youthful "home ruler."

Tippets and muffs of ermine, mouflon and Thibet are beautiful and appropriate for baby's full dress toilet.

Baskets filled with brushes, powder box and all the accessories of the toilet are lined with silk and Swiss mull, while hampers for the baby's clothes are extremely convenient and useful. Basket scales, miniature washstands, portable bathtubs and ingenious squeaking, singing and walking mechanical toys are all provided for the comfort and pleasure of the household treasure.

A very pretty wedding gown worn last week by a Parisian bride was of crepe de chine, with a plain skirt and moderate train, the bodice being entirely plaited and moulding the bust delightfully. Her hair was combed high and loose, and was partly hidden by a veil of old lace, with a wreath of orange blossoms. On the bust was displayed a bouquet of the same flowers, tied and held in place by long streamers of ribbons.

Another wedding toilette was of dahlia "merveilleux" velvet, delightfully elegant. The skirt, which was of a special cut, was garnished with folds of the same velvet.

The bodice was open over a vest of white satin, veiled with Venetian lace; on either side were large motifs of silk passementerie. The sleeve was almost entirely covered with small folds placed in groups, in a bracelet.

The collar was of chinchilla and at the bottom of the sleeve were funnel-shaped pieces lined with chinchilla, with this was worn a small collet of chinchilla, bordered by a flounce of dahlia velvet.

The maid of honor was in rose taffeta, while one bridesmaid wore sea-green taffeta and turquoise velvet, and the other a gown of blue cloth trimmed with an exquisite coiled embroidery.

We have spoken of the "marveilleuse" or mousseline velvet, one of the season's novelties. It is a silk velvet, light as veiling, which may be rumpled, broken, without leaving any trace. Placed over a silk foundation skirt, the velvet has folds of astonishing suppleness. One does not lament the heavy, stiff Lyons velvet of former times when one sees this light, supple tissue, which may be treated more like the most common woollen material.

The French skirts have very novel attractions. Many are quite plain in the front, like a tablier, narrower at the top than at the bottom. To complete the skirt and form the back of it a sort of deep gathered flounce, garnished with fur or plaited ribbon, is placed at the top and on the sides.

Very odd are these plaited ribbons, which are used in many widths on the same toilette. They are plaited without a heading, and held on the material by invisible points, which give them the appearance of being pasted.

Never has so much fur been worn. There are robes of American marten; also gray foxes, which are thrown around the neck. Furs are also very much used in furnishings. There are royal tigers, lions stretched out on the floor, coverings of chinchilla, and bed tapestries made of white foxskins, placed alongside each other, with the head hanging.

A fashionable woman should possess all the furs employed in various manners. She has bands of all kinds, whose use she changes each season. Pelerines, jackets, blouses, cuffs and collars. She has all of which one can dream, and still longs for more.

A smart wrap recently seen in Paris was of black velvet, forming a blouse on the front, with a bountiful band of marten garnishing all the contours. It is very modest after all the beautiful things of which we have just spoken, but nevertheless, very coquettish.

Odds and Ends.

USEFUL HINTS ON A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS.

Around the festival season is hardly the time when the economical side of cookery, or its plain side either, is apt to be much thought of. But that these latter views of the question are of practical value for most people, during those parts of the year that are not attended with elaborate effort and extra prodigality, there can be no doubt.

Rice Dishes.—Rice is, in this country, greatly under-valued as an article of food. It is cheap and nourishing. With or without milk, it may be eaten for breakfast, dinner or supper. One pound of rice boiled in a bag until tender, will make four or five pounds of pudding, which may be seasoned with salt, or sweetened with treacle or coarse sugar, or a little preserved fruit.

To boil rice, first soak it for seven hours in cold water, salted. Then put the soaked rice into a saucepan of boiling water and boil it ten minutes. Next, pour it into a cullender, and set it by the fire, when the grains will be separate and very large.

The water in which it has been boiled, in the East Indies and in China, is called congy water, and is prescribed by medical men there as nourishing food for sick persons; such water is, in fact, rice-gruel.

A little salt and pepper, and boiled in water, separately from the rice, and poured when hot on a plateful of hot boiled rice, makes it slightly savory. Or a few slices of onion and a little butter, may be added to the above. Or a few slices of fish or meat, added to the above, and boiled.

Or, on a soup-plateful of hot boiled rice, pour two lightly-boiled eggs, to which add a little cold butter, mix together, use with fish or meat, and it will be found substantial and agreeable food. Or, boiled rice, mixed with a little milk, sugar, and spice, will be found light and agreeable food either hot or cold.

Savory Rice.—Take six pounds of meat bones, which break into small pieces, and boil in ten quarts of water for four hours, having added three ounces of salt, a small bunch of thyme, bay-leaf, and savory. Put into a stewpan two onions sliced thin, half a pound of vegetables (carrots, turnips, celery, etc.), and half an ounce of sugar.

Put it on the fire for fifteen minutes, stirring it occasionally; add half-a-pound of oatmeal, and mix well; add two gallons of stock from the bones, and a quarter of a pound of rice, previously soaked; boil till soft and serve. Or, boil one pound of rice in three quarts of water, some allspice and salt, and a piece of dripping; stew gently, and when the rice is tender, grate over it strong cheese, and serve. Or, boil the rice dry, when add pepper and salt, two or three sliced onions, and a piece of dripping; stir until the onions are tender, when serve it in a deep dish.

Rice Stew.—Take a red herring, a few ounces of lean bacon cut small, three onions, and a sprig or two of thyme and parsley. Put the above into three pints of water, and boil it three-quarters of an hour, with one pound of rice. When it boils, set the pot by the side of the fire, when the rice will swell, and taking up all the water will become soft.

Plum Pudding.—Mix a quarter of a pound of raisins and the same of currants; one pint of flour, and three quarters of a pint of milk; six ounces of chopped suet, and three tablespoonfuls of treacle. Boil three hours.

Scotch Broth.—To four pounds of mutton, put one gallon of water in a saucepan; a teaspoonful of barley, two carrots sliced, two turnips sliced, two onions cut small, three carrots grated, the white part of a large cabbage chopped very small, and a small quantity of parsley. Season with pepper and salt. Boil very gently for three hours and a half, and then serve.

Vegetable Stew.—Put two ounces of butter into a deep stewpan; peel one onion, slice it thin, and put it on the fire till lightly brown (stirring now and then), and half a pound of vegetables, as turnips, leeks, celery, carrots, etc. Do not peel them, or throw away anything, but wet them well, cut them in a standing direction, put them into a stewpan, and fry ten minutes longer; add a pound and a quarter of peas and fill up with two gallons of water; let it simmer for three hours, or until the peas are in a pulp; mix half a pound of oatmeal with a pint of water, make it into a liquid paste, and pour it into the stewpan, stirring it with a spoon; add three ounces of salt, half an ounce of brown sugar, boil it ten minutes and it will be ready for use. A little mint, bay-leaf, thyme, majoram or winter cabbage, is an improvement, as is also soaking the peas in soft water.

Fish Stew.—Cut into pieces four pounds of fresh fish of any large kind; put them into a stewpan with three ounces of salt, half an ounce of sugar, a little pepper, a little thyme, and one quart of water; let it stew gently.

Then mix one pound of oatmeal with seven quarts of lukewarm water, and pour it over the fish; stir it gently, so as not to break the fish too much, and let it boil twenty minutes, when it will be done. A red herring, or salt fish previously soaked, is good to make this stew; but omit the salt if all salt fish is used.

Pea Soup.—Soak one quart of peas in seven quarts of water a day and a night; then slice some carrots, onions, or leeks with celery, and any sweet herb in to a frying-pan, and fry them in dripping, or lard, or fat pork, to a fine brown color. Add the above to the peas and water, and stew them in a closely covered pot three hours, until the peas be quite soft, stirring them now and then. Pass the whole through a cullender, or coarse open cloth and season with pepper and salt.

Or, cut into small pieces, one pound of beef, mutton, or pork; take half a pint of peas, which have been soaked in water twenty-four hours, four sliced turnips or carrots, six cooked potatoes, and two onions. Put to them seven pints of water,; let the whole boil gently over a very slow fire for two hours and a half. Then thicken it with a quarter of a quarter of a pound of oatmeal, mixed thin in a basin with a little of the soup; boil it up, stirring it all the time; then season with salt and pepper.

Colocannon.—To a dish of mashed potatoes add one-third of their quantity of young cabbage, cut up or spinach, previously boiled or mashed also. Season with pepper and salt, and add a little butter; warm and mix well together.

Poor man's sauce is made in France, by chopping up half a dozen shalots and a bunch of parsley, and warming them in equal quantities of vinegar and water, seasoned with salt and pepper.

The Ladies' Home Journal

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The magazine sells only by and of itself,—and at one price:

10 cents a copy. One dollar a year

The Curtis Publishing Company, Philadelphia

BEGINNING AND END.

BY M. C. A.

The supper is over; the hearth is swept;
And in the wood fire's glow
The children cluster to hear a tale
Of that time so long ago.

Life is a stocking, grandma says,
And yours is just begun,
But I am knitting the toe of mine,
And my work is almost done.

With merry hearts we begin to knit,
And the ribbing is almost play;
Some are gay-colored and some are white
And some are sober gray.

But most are made of many a hue,
With many a stitch set wrong,
And many a row to be sadly ripped
Ere the whole be fair and strong.

There are long plain spaces without a break
That in youth is hard to bear,
And many a weary tear is dropped
As we fashion the heel with care.

But the saddest, happiest time is that
We court and yet would shun,
When our heavenly father breaks the thread
And says that our work is done.

The children come to say "Good-night,"
With tears in their bright young eyes,
While in gradma's lap, with broken thread,
The finished stocking lies.

With His Own Weapon

BY R. D.

I DO not think I was morally justified, and I am sure I was not legally justified, in the course I took with James Marifield. A year after the occurrences I wrote the history of them, and below I give it from my MS.

There it lay before me in black and white, and in the erratic writing of Marifield himself:—

If you don't give up your pretensions to L. C. I will blow my brains out.—JAMES MARLFIELD.

For two years—a whole year before I made the acquaintance of Lucy Conset—Marifield had plagued the girl with undesired attentions until they grew into a hateful infection. She had never the least liking for him, and from the moment he showed a liking for her, terror was the only word which could express her feeling towards him.

"Even if my mother and father did not disapprove of him I would rather jump into the river than have anything to say to James Marifield," she had said to me when she and I were engaged, a month before my receipt of this note.

His threat of blowing out his brains did not at first cause me as much alarm as it would have created the day before, for on the table beside his letter lay his revolver, taken from him by me the previous evening.

Marifield was generous, quixotically generous, when his passions or prejudices were not in the way. After the engagement between Lucy and me became known to all Newton, Marifield and I met and spoke as though he had never cast an admiring glance at Lucy.

The evening before I got that note I met him on the Quay, the principal promenade of our little seaport town. "Have you a few minutes to spare, Akerman?" said he. "You have. Very good; will you come to my rooms? I want to have a quiet talk with you."

He was left some money by his father five years before, and ever since had been trying to decide what profession or branch of trade he should adopt. I was employed in my father's business, that of cabinet-making.

Marifield's next words that day were spoken in his sitting-room. "Take a chair," said he, and he plumped down into an armchair beside the table and opposite me.

He was a tall, round-shouldered, black-haired young man, with dark, quick-moving eyes. He leant forward, grasping the elbows of his chair so tightly that the backs of his hands whitened.

"So they tell me you are engaged to Lucy Conset," said he in a tone of scornful derision. "Are you, indeed? And I suppose you think you are going to marry her one of these fine days?"

I sat still for a moment, giving him time to add anything if he wished. Then I rose slowly and said, "If you have nothing else to say to me, Marifield, I will go now. You told me you wanted to talk to me, and now it seems you want to ask me questions about my private affairs. To you I can answer no questions about my private affairs, so I will bid you good-evening."

Like a flash he sprang up, and before I could move a step, was standing before me and the door, pale as death, with a revolver in his hand.

"Let this," he said, "be my persuader. Let it entreat you not to go away until we have had our talk out," and he smiled sardonically.

I had no fear he would shoot me there and then, violent as his temper was. But in the circumstances a physical struggle with him was not to be undertaken, except as a last resort. I looked at him steadily and said:

"If you do not put away that thing I will smash the window and cry 'Murder.' You are a splendid specimen of a cavalier and man of honor. You decoy a man to a quiet place and then threaten to murder him.

"You had not the common brute courage to shoot me on the Quay, because you had the fear lower than any fear known to the lowest beast, the fear of retribution. Put down that foolish weapon, sir, and try to remember that this moment anyone seeing you would mistake you for a man."

As I spoke the pallor left his face, and before I had finished it flushed a dusky red. The hand holding the revolver fell to his side, and with bent head he went back to his chair, flung himself into it, and threw the revolver on the table.

"You are right," he said, with a profound sigh. 'You are right, Akerman. I have behaved like a blackguard and a poltroon." Rage had left the man and he sat cowed and collapsed.

"The subject you mentioned," I said, "can at no time be spoken of between you and me with the least advantage. You regard me as a rival, but there was never any rivalry between us, for you never had a chance. I will try to forget what has just now occurred in this room, and it will be better for you not to have this dangerous thing by you." I took the revolver off the table and dropped it into my pocket.

* * * * * * *

This is how it came about that I had his revolver by me when I received his note threatening suicide. After the scene of yesterday evening and this note now before me, it was impossible to regard Marifield as a sane man. There was no foretelling what folly or crime he might commit.

He might kill himself, he might kill me, he might kill Lucy. If the marriage were over, all would no doubt be safe; but the marriage was not to take place until September. It was now June, and the thought of living three months in the glare of a madman's eye, and never knowing for an hour what hideous calamity his hands might be preparing, was simply intolerable.

True, I had taken the revolver from him, but he could buy another any day, any hour. Why he might have had a new one when he wrote this note.

I jumped to my feet in dismay at this last thought, thrust Marifield's note and revolver in my pocket, seized my hat, and darting out at the top of my speed, did not pull up or slacken until I reached Conset's.

Lucy saw me coming and opened the door.

"Thank Heaven you are safe, dearest!" I cried, clasping her in my arms.

"What on earth is the matter?" she said looking at me with a smile. "You look as wild as James Marifield!"

I hurried her into the back sitting-room—I feared the front of the house for her. What if this maniac should pass and see her through a window?

"Lucy," said I as impressively as my want of breath and the hurry of my thoughts would allow, "you are not to stir out of doors, and you are not to show yourself at a front window until you hear again from me. Marifield has gone raging mad, and you might not be safe if you met him or even if he saw you."

She did not laugh now. She saw I was in full earnest and great alarm. She plied me with questions. I told her nothing about the evening before, but said he had been talking about shooting people.

"People!" she cried, repeating the word and clinging to me. "If he talks of shooting anyone it must be you, Tom."

"He is not threatening me. He is threatening to blow out his own brains. But he is mad, and changes his mind every minute. There is no depending on him at all, and you must do what I asked."

"And you? What will you do, Tom? Oh, this cruel madman will kill my darling! You must not leave me! I will not let you out of the house to be shot in the street."

"My dear, I have a plan for getting him away from Newton until after September."

"The police?"

'No, no! That, dearest, would bring your name out in court, and would otherwise be most undesirable. My brother George's brig, the Enterprise, is hauled out into the stream, and sails for Valparaiso this evening. As I ran here I thought that a long sea voyage would be the best thing for Marifield's health, and he shall go."

"But he will not go. He will refuse to stir."

"I am confident that when he hears the way I shall put the matter he will go. And now I must be off. Mind, you are to keep in the back of the house until you see me again."

* * * * * * *

It took some time before Lucy would allow me to venture forth, but at last I was off and hastening to the Quay. I found a boat and rowed to the Enterprise, which was lying in the middle of the river a little below the town. My brother George was abroad, busy getting the brig ready for sea. I led him aft, told him how matters stood, and asked him to help me in carrying out my scheme.

To my horror he demurred, said he did not like the look of the thing, that he had the legal aspect and risk of the affair to consider, and that at best it would cause him a great deal of trouble, and hamper him with serious responsibility.

I reasoned and pleaded as best I could, and in the end he was won. I wrote a note to Marifield, and sent it ashore. In half an hour Marifield came up the accommodation ladder of the brig and I took him down the companion to the cabin.

He sat down on the locker at one side of the table, and I on the locker over against him. I wasted no words in coming to business. I said—

"You have been talking about shooting me and shooting yourself. Have you got a weapon?'

"No; not since you stole mine. But I'll get one before the sun sets," said he, with an ugly glare.

"That's all right," said I. "Now, to-day I have been shuffling and dealing the cards in the game between you and me, and I have dealt myself a full hand of trumps. In the note I wrote you I said I was aboard this brig, thinking of a voyage to Valparaiso, and anxious to see you before the vessel sailed; but I did not tell you the voyage I had in mind was for you, not me."

He threw himself back and roared laughing, a mirthless laugh, accompanied by a look of savage anger.

"There is as much chance of my going as of the sea between this and Valparaiso running dry," said he; and then burst into fresh laughter.

"Hold on," said I, "hear me out. In my pocket I have a letter from you, threatening to blow your brains out—not that people who threaten this thing often do it—and I have only to send the ship's boat ashore for the police and hand you over to them. Would it not be better for your health and comfort and reputation to go to Valparaiso than to jail?'

"If that's your hand of trumps you may fling it out of the skylight, for there isn't the making of a trick in the whole lot. You'd better go to Valparaiso yourself, if you have any regard for your health, because as certain as there is a sky above us I will kill you when I meet you, for this cowardly attempt to shanghai me."

He shook his fist mockingly in my face.

"Good," said I. "Then between you and me it's war to the knife?'

"To the knife."

"So let it be. Yesterday evening you wanted to kill me; to-day, you swear you will do it. Now, it is justifiable in me to defend my own life even at the cost of yours——"

"And hang," he interpolated.

"No; here is your own revolver."

I took it out of my pocket.

"Here is your written word that you mean to put an end to yourself. Suppose this revolver should go off now, and later be found lying beside you, how do you think the affair would seem to the average petty jury, with only me to tell the tale?"

He fell back, his jaw dropped, and he stared at me with eyes white and round with terror. I think he had not the strength to speak.

"The brig is now under way," I said, after a long pause, during which he sat like one in a trance. "The pilot will quit her in an hour. I shall go ashore with him, leaving the revolver and your letter with my brother. You can land at Valparaiso, or come back in the brig. Now I have shown you all my cards."

I went ashore with the pilot an hour later, leaving my brother in the cabin with Marifield. Of course, I had no intention of using the revolver. I calculated on his judging me by himself, and believing me capable of doing so. He landed at Valparaiso, and Newton saw him no more. He sold his property in Newton, and went into the copper ore trade in Chili.

September brought me Lucy and at the same time a partnership in my father's business.

CLEVER JUGGLERY.—An American professor of legerdemain witnessed the following trick at a juggler's performance in India some little time back. A woman with a baby swung in a bag around her waist came on the stage and endeavored to balance a ball on her nose. This she failed to do on account of the hindrance caused by the child.

She repeated the attempt, but met with no better success than on the first trial. The juggler all the while was standing at the side of the stage, apparently furious at the repeated failures of the woman, and finally, in a rage, he rushed toward her and tore the little babe away from her.

The woman screamed as she realized the danger into which the child was thrown, and the indignation spread to the audience. Unconcerned apparently about the babe, its mother, or the audience, the juggler took the child and threw it into a bag which he held in his right hand.

Then, taking a firm hold on the neck of the bag, he whirled it over his head and violently brought it down upon the floor. At the same time the woman screamed and fell upon her knees, begging the juggler to desist; but he told her to keep quiet, and repeated the performance.

By this time two English officers were on the stage, and were struggling with the juggler, trying in vain to get hold of the bag. The magician pushed them to one side, scowled angrily over their interference, and then forced them off the stage. Then, bowing and smiling to the audience, he placed his hand in the bag and drew out a pair of white doves, which flew on to both shoulders of the juggler.

A scream in the corner next attracted attention, and there in a cradle was seen the babe, who all had supposed by this time had become an immortal, laughing and clapping his hands with joy.

THERE is no natural opposition between justice and what we call benevolence. They are distinct, each in itself, and not to be confounded, regarded only as different manifestations of the same spirit—that of sympathy and fellow-feeling. The real contrast lies in selfishness and sympathy. These are mutually exclusive—they cannot dwell together.

A bright girl writes
from Cambridge, Massachusetts:

"Last fall I read an article under the head of 'Earning Money for Christmas.' I was not so much interested in earning money for this purpose as I was in obtaining the necessary sum to attend the Christian Endeavor Convention in San Francisco this summer, and was unwilling to ask my father for assistance. I wrote for information, and took up the work. I worked only during leisure hours, and, thanks to your generous assistance, have earned enough to take the desired trip, including a visit to Yellowstone Park, and to pay all the incidental expenses."

This is only one of hundreds of similar letters received.

The Curtis Publishing Company
Philadelphia

THE LADIES' HOME JOURNAL

Humorous.

FOR THE TABLE.

She read the cook book over,
Her purse she emptied quite,
To making a tempting viand
And have it cook just right.

With sprigs of vegetation,
And bits of gilding gay,
And dainty ruffled paper,
She made a rare display.

It would have been perfection,
A thing of joy complete,
If she had not forgotten
To put in things to eat.

Water-colors—Rainbow hues.

Illegal corn measure—A tight shoe.

The best thing out.—A conflagration.

The best ship to have command of—Friendship.

When are sheep like ink?—When they are in the pen.

When is a spider like a pigeon?—When he is taking a fly.

When is a fast little boy like a chimney?—When he begins to smoke.

Which is the left side of a round plum-pudding?—That which is not eaten.

What word is that which you make shorter by adding two letters?—Short.

Why is twice 11 like twice 10?—Because twice 11 is twenty-two, and twice 10 is twenty too.

Why are wrinkles like the figures of a clock?—Because they are marks of time on the face.

"I say, old chap, you haven't such a thing as a dollar about you?"

"How on earth did you guess that?"

An Irishman being asked why he wore his stockings wrong side out, replied, "Because there's a hole on the ither side ov'em."

What nonsense it is to say that a man is inclined to be bald! When a man is becoming bald, it is quite against his inclination.

When may a parson be said to be gifted with miraculous powers?—When he unites in one the vigor of youth with decrepit old age.

He: "Why are you so sad, darling?"

She: "I was just thinking, dearest, that this was the last evening we could be together till to-morrow."

Irate Traveler: "I thought this railway was for the benefit of the public."

Railway Official: "You're mistaken. The public is for the benefit of the railway."

Mamma: "Susie, what do you mean by all this noise? See how quiet Willie is!"

Susie: "Of course he's quiet, ma—that's our game! He's papa coming home late, and I'm you."

Little boy, with swollen face: "Oh, dear, I wish I had grandpa's teeth or the baby's!"

Mother: "Why?"

Little boy: "Grandpa's teeth are all gone, and baby's haven't come yet."

"These shoes you sold me last week squeak so that they keep me awake nights," said the customer, entering the shoe store.

"My dear sir," replied the shoe dealer reassuringly, "you shouldn't sleep in them."

Friend: "Now that you have made millions, what will you do?"

Old Bullion: "I shall retire and amuse myself by telling people what a burden wealth is and how happy I was when I was poor."

A gentleman having a horse that run away and broke his wife's neck was told by a neighbor that he wished to purchase it for his wife to ride upon.

"No," said the wretch, "I intend to marry again myself."

"They married for love, I believe?"

"Yes."

"Are they happy?"

"They don't know yet. They are waiting to see what her father is going to do for them."

Mother: I wonder what we can do with Johnny, he has such a way of exaggerating everything. He is always making a mountain out of a mole hill.

Father: I think, my dear, we had better make him a real estate agent.

"Can a man see without eyes?" asked the professor.

"Yes, sir," was the prompt answer.

"Pray, sir, how do you make that out?" cried the astonished professor.

"He can see with one," replied Juvenis.

Mrs. Woman's Righter: "If they refuse to pass the measure I desire, I'll adjourn the meeting."

Her friend: "How can you do that? You are not chairman."

Mrs. Woman's Righter: "I have a mouse in this box, and, if they don't do as I want them, I'll set it loose."

An Irish gentleman was recently attended by an eminent London physician, who, pausing, and looking at him with an inquiring glance, said: "I should like to know, sir, if your family have been long-lived?"

"Long-lived, is it?" responded the patient, thoughtfully.

"Well, doctor, I'll just tell you how it is. Our family is a west of Ireland family, and the age of my ancestors depended entirely on the Judge and jury who tried them."

MARRIAGES MARRED.

There was a case where a very dratic scene actually occurred in the church. The bride had been known as a widow for seven years or more.

She either consideried that her first husband must be dead, or, with the vague misunderstanding of law which so many of her sex are prone to, believed that, as he had deserted her for so long, she was free to marry again.

When the couple were actually at the altar, the husband came forward and forbade the marriage. It seemed that he was a scoundrel, who had deserted his wife simply to avoid having to support her, and that having heard that she was going to marry again had come forward simply out of malice.

When these facts became known, the wedding party were so enraged that they set upon him, dragged him to the nearest pond, and gave him a thorough ducking.

A case which bears some resemblance to the last, only the motives were different, occurred in a different class of life. A young man who had been introduced into society by a lady of position, and who passed as a wealthy bachelor, became engaged to a young girl. The wedding was shortly to be celebrated. One day at a party, a man came up to him and said, in the presence of the bride-elect:

"By-the-bye, I saw your wife the other day. I was visiting a poor friend of mine at the asylum, and I inquired after your wife. I was glad to hear that there was every prospect that she would be cured."

The bridegroom-elect looked absolutely dumbfounded; the intended bride fled from him and that marriage was broken off.

A curious instance of a broken engagement occurred not long ago, when a young lady engaged herself to one man and then was married to another, so suddenly that the announcement of her marriage appeared in the very same issue of the daily paper in which the jilted one announced that his engagement with her was broken off.

In another case the man allowed matters to go on almost to the eleventh hour, all the preparations to be completed, and a preliminary party to be given by the bride's people for the porpose of showing off the presents.

On the day before the wedding he disappeared, and wrote to say that he was so dissatisfied with a certain article in the settlements that he declined to carry out his promise. The bride spent the wedding eve in hysterics, and her family in writing letters putting off the guests, the clergyman, etc.

In another case a lady said "No" at the altar, whereupon the clergyman observed:—

"Then why have you come here?"

The bride replied that she did not know.

The best man, seeing that she was nearly crazed with nervousness, whispered in her ear:—

"If you don't behave sensibly, and say 'Yes,' like a lady, I will take my brother away and you shall never see him again."

Whereupon the stronger fright prevailed, she said "Yes," and the services proceeded.

One wedding had to be postponed because the bridegroom made a mistake and got into an express train instead of a slow train, and was carried past the station of his destination.

He found it was impossible to get a train till next morning, and not one then to bring him in time for the wedding. So he wired, and the wedding had to be postponed till another day.

A marriage was very nearly postponed on account of a hunting accident. The man went out hunting a few days before his wedding day, was thrown, and broke his collar-bone.

It therefore seemed inevitable that the wedding should be put off. The lady, however, declared that she would either be married on the appointed day, or not at all.

The result was, that the wedding took place in the bridegroom's bedroom, with the groom lying motionless and tightly tied up in the figure of eight bandages, while the bride knelt at the side of the bed. She began her wedded life with nursing.

There have been cases in which men have broken down from pure nervousness on the wedding day and kept away, to the great dismay of the bride and the scandal of her friends. One of these timorous souls was actually found hiding in his wine cellar.

Another wrote a very singular letter to the bride, saying that if she had had any respect for his feelings she would have consented to a private wedding as he had wished, and that as he found himself quite unable to face the ordeal of a public wedding, he was going away and she would never see him again. He kept his word, and meanwhile the bride, after waiting for an hour in the vestry, was taken home in violent hysterics.

MADE FROM INSECTS.

Many persons will be surprised to learn that a use has been found for our domestic friend the cockroach. For years he has been branded as a pest, and we have dosed him with borax, plaster of Paris, and insect powder. Now the tables are turned, and the hateful insect is used to physic us.

If cockroaches will cure us, there is no reason why spiders should not be tried also. As a matter of fact, they have been used by the homœopaths for years. Solomon told us we could find spiders "even in kings' palaces," but nowadays we can trace them in innocent-looking tinctures and sugar-coated pills.

"Tarantula pilules" is a title that should be worth a fortune if well advertised, and a tincture prepared from the mygale—the great bird-eating spider of Mexico—ought certainly to possess equal virtues. Our choice, however, is not confined to giant spiders.

The garden spider with the gold or silver body, so common in the summer, will yield a useful preparation—if we may trust to one pharmacopœia.

A few of these insects, rubbed down in a mortar with a little spirit, will make a "mother tincture" from which countless dilutions can be prepared.

If this will not suffice, the black Curacoa spider from West Indian orange groves, or the gray spider of Kentucky, may be used, according to taste.

The homœopaths are said to be fond of beetles, and they treat ladybirds in the same way as the spiders. They also get an essence from the Colorado beetle—the insect which ruined the potato crops a few years back.

It is one thing to rob the bees wholesale and secure their wax and honey, but it is rather hard lines to turn her into medicine as well. But she has to go in with the rest, and yield her life in the cause of science. Of course, anyone who has felt a bee's sting knows what a powerful drug its poison must be.

It's rather dangerous work robbing a hive of bees of their stings and poison. The method recommended in books is simple but exciting. The bees are to be caught in a bottle as they are leaving their home in the early morning. They are then deprived of their poison bags and stings by means of scissors, and the severed portions are soaked in spirits to make a tincture.

Besides insects there are other queer things used in medicine at the present time. To give only two examples, remedies are prepared from the starfish and the crayfish. Snake venom, notably that of the cobra, the rattlesnake, and the adder—is sometimes used.

Nowadays a great many drugs of animal origin are being experimented with, and some people prophesy that they will eventually oust all the rest. Anyway, people are getting medicine as well as food from domestic animals like sheep pigs, and fowls.

It may frighten nervous people to hear that explosives are used in medicine. Fortunately, however, the nitro-glycerine which is given in heart disease is so well diluted in such small doses that no harm can come of it. The gun-cotton, too, used by surgeons is dissolved in spirit and so loses its power to explode.

Ambergris and musk, two perfumes of animal origin, have both been used as remedies. But the musk costs two dollars a dose, so that only few can afford to take it.

NEAT WIVES AND TOUCHY HUSBANDS—Women have their faults, 'tis true, and very provoking ones they sometimes are; but if we would all learn, men and women, that with certain virtues which we admire are always coupled certain disagreeablenesses, we might make up our minds more easily to accept the bitter with the sweet.

For instance, every husband, we believe, delights in a cleanly, well-ordered house, free from dust spots and unseemly stains; the painstaking machinery necessary to keep it so, he wishes never to see; or, seeing too often forgets to praise.

If then, his wife, true to her instincts towards cleanliness, gently reminds him, when he comes home, that he has forgotten to use the doormat before entering the sitting-room on a muddy day, let him reflect before he gives her a lordly, impatient, ungracious "pshaw!" how the reverse of the picture would suit him—viz., a slatternly "easy" woman, whose apartments are a constant mortification to him in the presence of visitors.

It is a poor return when a wife has made everything fresh and bright, to be unwilling to take a little pains to keep it so, or to be properly reminded, if forgetful on these points, upon which many husbands are unreasonably "touchy," even while secretly admiring the pleasant results of the vigilant eye of the good house-mother.

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$1.00 a year; 10 cents a copy.

THE CURTIS PUBLISHING COMPANY
PHILADELPHIA